THE

# POETICAL WORKS

OF

# JOHN MILTON.

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY

WILLIAM HAYLEY.

VOL. I.

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Joannes Baptista Mansus, Marchio Villensis, vir ingenii laude, tum litterarum studio, nec non et bellica virtute, apud Italos clarus in primis est. Ad quem Torquati Tasi dialogus extat de Amicitia scriptus; erat enim Tasi amicissimus; ab quo etiam inter Campaniæ principes celebratur; in illo poemate cui titulus Gerusalemme Conquistata; lib. 20.

Fra cavalier magnanimi, è cortesi
Risplende il Manso——

Is auctorem Neapoli commorantem summâ benevolentiâ prosecutus est, multaque ei detulit humanitatis officia. Ad hunc itaque hospes ille antequam, ab ea urbe discederet, ut ne ingratum se ostenderet, hoc carmen misit.


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THE

# LIFE OF MILTON,

IN

## THREE PARTS.

BY

## WILLIAM HAYLEY.

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Ολβιος, ὃς μέγα ἔργον ἐν ἀθανάτοισιν ἀνύσσας,
Ναίει ἀπήμαντος καὶ ἀγήραος ἤματα πάντα.

HESIOD. THEOGONIA, V. 953.

Magnarum virium est tractare sacra tam splendide, simplicia tam erudite, inculta tam polite, retrusa tam dilucide, a sensu communi abhorrentia tam populariter, periculosa tam libere, severa tam plausibiliter. Et tamen hunc virum, quem ne summi quidem queant assequi, non verentur calumniari et mediocres. ERASMUS.

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# LIFE OF MILTON

## PART I.

The character of Milton has been scrutinized with all the minuteneſs of inveſtigation, which oppoſite paſſions could ſuggeſt. The virulent antagoniſt and the enraptured idolater have purſued his ſteps with equal pertinacity; nor have we wanted men of learning and virtue, who, devoid of prejudice and enthuſiaſm, both in politics and in poetry, have endeavoured to weigh his merits exactly in the balance of truth and reaſon.

What new light then can be thrown upon a life, whoſe incidents have been ſo eagerly collected, and ſo frequently retailed? what novelty of remark can be expected in a review of poems, whoſe beauties and blemiſhes have been elaborately examined, in critical diſſertations that almoſt rival in excellence the poetry they diſcuſs? aſſuredly but little. Yet there remains, perhaps, one method of giving a degree of intereſt and illuſtration to the life of Milton, which it has not hitherto received:—a method which his accompliſhed friend of Italy, the Marquis of Villa, in ſome meaſure, adopted in his intereſting life of Taſſo; and which two engaging biographers of later date, the Abbé de Sade and Mr. Maſon, have carried to greater perfection in their reſpective memoirs of Petrarch and of Gray. By weaving into their narrative ſelections of verſe and proſe, from the various writings of thoſe they wiſhed to commemorate, each of theſe affectionate memorialiſts may be ſaid to have taught the poet he loved "to become his own biographer;" an experiment that may, perhaps, be tried on Milton with the happieſt effect: as in thoſe of his works, that are at preſent the leaſt known, he has ſpoken frequently of himſelf. Not from vanity, a failing too cold and low for his ardent and elevated mind: but, in advanced life, from

motives of justice and honour, to defend himself against the poisoned arrows of slander; and, in his younger days, from that tenderness and simplicity of heart, which lead a youthful poet to make his own affections and amusements the chief subjects of his song.

The great aim of the subsequent account, is to exhibit a full and just idea of Milton, as a poet, and a man. These volumes are devoted to the decoration of his poetry; and the Editors are desirous of presenting their Milton to the world only in a poetical and a domestic point of view. His manners and cast of mind, in various periods of life, may appear in a new and agreeable light, from the following collection and arrangement of the many little sketches, which his own hand has occasionally given us of his passions and pursuits. Several of these, indeed, have been fondly aſsembled by Toland or Richardson: men who, different as they were in their general sentiments and principles, yet sympathized completely in their zeal for the renown of Milton; delighting to dwell on his character with that "shadow of friendship, that complacency and ardour of attachment, which (as Pope has observed in speaking of Homer) we naturally feel for the great geniuses of former time." But those who have endeavoured to illustrate the personal history of the great English author, by exhibiting paſsages from some of his neglected works, have almost confined themselves to selections from his prose.

There is an ampler field for the study of his early temper and turn of mind in his Latin and Italian poetry: here the heart and spirit of Milton are displayed with all the franknes of youth. I select what has a peculiar tendency to show, in the clearest light, his native disposition; because his character as a man, has been recently misrepresented. I am under no fear that the frequency or length of these selections may be exposed to censure; having the pleasure, and advantage, of presenting them to the English reader in the elegant and spirited version of a poet, and a friend; with pride and delight I add the name of Cowper. This gentleman, who is prepared to oblige the world with a complete translation of Milton's Latin and Italian poetry, has kindly favoured me with the liberty of transcribing from his admirable work, whatever I wish to insert in this narrative. Since I am indebted to Milton for a friendship,

which I regard as honourable in the highest degree, may I be indulged in the hope of leaving a lasting memorial of it in these pages.

A book devoted to the honour of Milton, may admit, I hope, without impropriety, the praises due to a living author, who is become his poetical interpreter; an office, which the spirit of the divine bard may be gratified in his having afsumed; for afsuredly, my friend bears no common resemblance to his most illustrious predeceſsor, not only in the energy and hallowed use of poetical talents, but in that beneficent fervour and purity of heart, which entitle the great poet to as large a portion of affectionate esteem, as he has long poſsefsed of admiration.

John Milton was born in London, on the 9th of December, 1608, at the house of his father in Bread-street, and baptized on the 20th of the same month. His Christian name descended to him from his grandfather: the family, once opulent, proprietors of Milton in Oxfordshire, lost that estate in the civil wars of York and Lancaster; and was indebted, perhaps, to adversity for much higher distinction, than opulence can bestow. John, the grandfather of the poet, became deputy-ranger in the forest of Shotover, not far from Oxford; and intending to educate his son as a gentleman, he placed him at Christ-church in that university: but being himself a rigid papist, he disinherited the young and devout scholar for an attachment to the doctrines of the reformation; and reduced him to the neceſsity of quitting the path of literature, for a leſs honourable, but more lucrative profeſsion.

The discarded student applied himself to the employment of a scrivener, which has varied with the variations of life and manners.—A scrivener, in remoter ages, is supposed to have been a mere transcriber; but at the period we speak of, his occupation united the two profitable branches of drawing contracts, and of lending money. The emoluments of this profeſsion enabled the father of Milton to bestow most abundantly on his son, those advantages of education which had been cruelly withdrawn from himself. The poet was happy in both his parents; and to the merits of both he has borne affectionate and honourable testimony. The maiden name of his mother has been disputed; but it seems reasonable to credit the account of Philips, her grandson, the earliest biogra-

pher of Milton, who had the advantage of living with him as a relation, and a disciple.

Her name, according to this author, who speaks highly of her virtue, was Caston; and her family was originally from Wales. Milton, in mentioning his own origin, with a decent pride, in reply to one of his revilers, aſserts that his mother was a woman of exemplary character, and peculiarly distinguished by her extensive charity. The parental kindneſs, and the talents of his father, he has celebrated in a Latin poem, which cannot be too warmly admired, as a monument of filial tenderneſs, and poetical enthusiasm. It is probable, that the severe manner in which that indulgent father had been driven from the pursuits of learning, induced him to exert uncommon liberality and ardour in the education of his son. Though immersed himself in a lucrative occupation, he seems to have retained great elegance of mind, and to have amused himself with literature and musick. To the latter he applied so succeſsfully, that according to Doctor Burney, the accomplished historian of that captivating art, "he became a voluminous composer, equal in science, if not in genius, to the best musicians of his age." Nor did his talents paſs without celebrity or reward: Philips relates, that for one of his devotional compositions, in forty parts, he was honoured with a gold chain and medal, by a Polish prince to whom he presented it. This mark of distinction was frequently conferred on men who rose to great excellence in different arts and sciences; perhaps the ambition of young Milton was first awakened by these gifts of honour bestowed upon his father.

A parent, who could enliven the drudgery of a dull profeſsion by a variety of elegant pursuits, must have been happy to discern, and eager to cherish, the first dawnings of genius in his child. In this point of view we may contemplate, with peculiar delight, the infantine portrait of Milton, by that elegant and faithful artist Cornelius Jansen. Aubrey, the antiquarian, observing, in his manuscript memoirs of our author, that he was ten years old when this picture was drawn, affirms that he was "then a poet." This expreſsion may lead us to imagine, that the portrait was executed to encourage the infant author; and if so, it might operate as a powerful incentive to his future exertion: the permanent bias of an



IOHN MILTON.

Ætat. 10.

From an Original Picture in the Collection of
The Revd. Mr. Peckard of Magd. Coll.
near the Physic Garden.

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active spirit often originates in the petty incidents of childhood; and as no human mind ever glowed with a more intense, or with a purer flame of literary ambition than the mind of Milton, it may not be unpleasing to conjecture how it first caught the sparks that gradually mounted to a blaze of unrivalled vehemence and splendour.

His education, as Doctor Newton has well observed, united the opposite advantages of private and public instruction: of his early paſsion for letters, he has left the following record in his second defence.

" My father destined me from my infancy to the study of polite literature, which I embraced with such avidity, that, from the age of twelve, I hardly ever retired from my books before midnight: this proved the first source of injury to my eyes, whose natural weakneſs was attended with frequent pains of the head. But as all these disadvantages could not repreſs my ardour for learning, my father took care to have me instructed, by various preceptors, both at home and at school."

His domestick tutor was Thomas Young, of Eſsex, who being obliged to quit his country on account of religious opinions, became minister to the English merchants at Hamburgh. It was probably from this learned and conscientious man that Milton caught, not only his paſsion for literature, but that steadineſs and unconquerable integrity of character, by which he was distinguished through all the viciſsitudes of a tempestuous life. His reverential gratitude and affection towards this preceptor are recorded in two Latin epistles, and a Latin elegy addreſsed to him: they suggest a most favourable idea of the poet's native disposition; and furnish an effectual antidote to the poison of that most injurious aſsertion, that " he hated all, whom he was required to obey." Could untractable pride be the characteristick of a mind, which has expreſsed its regard for a disciplinarian, sufficiently rigid, with a tenderneſs so conspicuous in the following verses of the fourth elegy?

Vivit ibi antiquæ clarus pietatis honore
Præsul, Christicolas pascere doctus oves;
Ille quidem ést animæ plusquam pars altera nostræ,
Dimidio vitæ vivere cogor ego.

Hei mihi! quot pelagi, quot montes interjecti,
Me faciunt alia parte carere mei!
Charior ille mihi, quam tu doctiſsime Graium
Cliniadi, pronepos qui Telamonis erat;
Quamque Stagyrites generoso magnus alumno,
Quem peperit Lybico Chaonis alma Jovi.
Qualis Amyntorides, qualis Philyrëius heros
Myrmidonum regi, talis et ille mihi.
Primus ego Aonios, illo præeunte, receſsus
Lustrabam, et bifidi sacra vireta jugi,
Pieriosque hausi latices, Clioque favente,
Castalio sparsi læta ter ora mero.

There lives, deep learn'd, and primitively just,
A faithful steward of his Christian trust.
My friend, and favourite inmate of my heart,
That now is forced to want its better part.
What mountains now, and seas, alas, how wide!
Me from my other, dearer self divide:
Dear as the sage, renown'd for moral truth,
To the prime spirit of the Attic youth!
Dear as the Stagyrite to Amnon's son,
His pupil, who disdain'd the world he won!
Nor so did Chiron, or so Phœnix shine,
In young Achilles' eyes, as he in mine.
First led by him through sweet Aonian shade,
Each sacred haunt of Pindus I survey'd;
Explored the fountain, and, the muse my guide,
Thrice steep'd my lips in the Castalian tide.

And again, in expreſsing his regret upon the length of their separation:—

Necdum ejus licuit mihi lumina pascere vultu,
Aut linguæ dulces aure bibiſse sonos.

Nor yet his friendly features feast my sight,
Nor his sweet accents my fond ear delight.

As the tenderneſs of the young poet is admirably displayed in the beginning of this elegy, his more acknowledged characteristick, religious fortitude, is not leſs admirable in the close of it.

At tu sume animos, nec spes cadat anxia curis,
  Nec tua concutiat decolor oſsa metus.
Sis etenim quamvis fulgentibus obsitus armis,
  Intententque tibi millia tela necem,
At nullis vel inerme latus violabitur armis,
  Deque tuo cuspis nulla cruore bibet.
Namque eris ipse Dei radiante sub ægide tutus,
  Ille tibi custos, et pugil ille tibi ;—
Et tu (quod superest miseris) sperare memento,
  Et tua magnanimo pectore vince mala ;
Nec dubites quandoque frui melioribus annis,
  Atque iterum patrios poſse videre lares.

But thou take courage ! strive against despair !
Shake not with dread, nor nourish anxious care !
What though grim war on every side appears,
And thou art menaced by a thousand spears ;
Not one shall drink thy blood ; not one offend
Even the defenceleſs bosom of my friend ;
For thee the ægis of thy God shall hide,
Jehovah's self shall combat on thy side :
Thou, therefore, as the most afflicted may,
Still hope, and triumph o'er thy evil day !
Trust, thou shalt yet behold a happier time,
And yet again enjoy thy native clime !

The reader inclined to sympathize in the joys of Milton, will be gra-

tified in being informed, that his preceptor, whose exile and poverty he pathetically lamented, and whose prosperous return he predicted, was in a few years restored to his country, and became master of Jesus college in Cambridge.

As the year in which he quitted England (1623) corresponds with the fifteenth year of his pupil's age, it is probable that Milton was placed at that time under the care of Mr. Gill, and his son; the former chief master of Saint Paul's school, the latter his aſsistant, and afterwards his succeſsor. It is remarkable that Milton, who has been so uncandidly represented as an uncontroulable spirit, and a spurner of all just authority, seems to have contracted a tender attachment to more than one disciplinarian concerned in his education. He is said to have been the favourite scholar of the younger Gill, and he has left traces of their friendship in three Latin epistles, that expreſs the highest esteem for the literary character and poetical talents of his instructor.

On the 12th of February, 1624, he was entered, not as a sizer, which some of his biographers have erroneously aſserted, but as a pensioner of Christ's college in Cambridge.—"At this time," says Doctor Johnson, "he was eminently skilled in the Latin tongue; and he himself, by annexing the dates to his first compositions, a boast of which the learned Politian had given him an example, seems to commend the earlineſs of his own proficiency to the notice of posterity: but the products of his vernal fertility have been surpaſsed by many, and particularly by his contemporary Cowley. Of the powers of the mind it is difficult to form an estimate; many have excelled Milton in their first eſsays, who never rose to works like Paradise Lost."

This is the first of many remarks replete with detraction, in which an illustrious author has indulged his spleen against Milton in a life of the poet, where an ill-subdued propensity to censure is ever combating with a neceſsity to commend. The partizans of the powerful critick, from a natural partiality to their departed master, affect to consider his malignity as existing only in the prejudices of those who endeavour to counteract his injustice. A biographer of Milton ought therefore to regard it as his indispensable duty, to show how far this malignity is diffused

through a long series of observations, which affect the reputation both of the poet and the man; a duty that must be painful, in proportion to the sincerity of our esteem for literary genius; since, different as they were in their principles, their manners, and their writings, both the poet and his critical biographer are aſsuredly entitled to the praise of exalted genius: perhaps in the republic of letters, there never existed two writers more deservedly distinguished, not only for the energy of their mental faculties, but for a generous and devout desire to benefit mankind by their exertion. Yet it must be lamented (and by the lovers of Milton in particular) that a moralist, who has given us in the Rambler, such sublime leſsons for the discipline of the heart and mind, should be unable to preserve his own from that acrimonious spirit of detraction, which led him to depreciate, to the utmost of his power, the rare abilities, and perhaps the still rarer integrity of Milton. It may be said, that the truly eloquent and splendid encomium, which he has bestowed on the great work of the poet, ought to exempt him from such a charge. The singular force and beauty of that encomium shall be mentioned in the proper place, and with all the applause they merit; but here it is just to recollect, that the praise of the encomiast is nearly confined to the sentence he paſses as a critick; his more diffusive detraction may be traced in almost every page of the biographer; not to encounter it on its first appearance, and wherever it is visible and important, would be to fail in that justice and regard towards the character of Milton, which he perhaps of all men has most eminently deserved.

In the preceding citation, it is evidently the purpose of Doctor Johnson to degrade Milton below Cowley, and many other poets distinguished by juvenile composition: but Mr. Warton has, with great taste and judgment, exposed the error of Doctor Johnson, in preferring the Latin poetry of Cowley to that of Milton. An eminent foreign critick has bestowed that high praise on the juvenile productions of our author, which his prejudiced countryman is inclined to deny; Morhoff has affirmed, with equal truth and liberality, that the verses which Milton produced in his childhood discover both the fire and judgment of maturer life: commendation that no impartial reader will be inclined to extenuate, who peruses

the spirited epistle to his exiled preceptor, composed in his eighteenth year.

Some of his English verses bear an earlier date. The first of his juvenile productions in the language, which he was destined to ennoble, is a paraphrase of the cxivth psalm: it was executed at the age of fifteen, and discovers a power, that Dryden and other more presumptuous criticks have unjustly denied to Milton, the power of moving with facility in the fetters of rhyme; this power is still more conspicuous in the poem he wrote at the age of seventeen, on the death of his sister's child; a composition peculiarly entitled to the notice of those, who love to contemplate the early dawn of poetical genius. In this performance, puerile as it is, in every sense of the word, the intelligent reader may yet discern, as in the bud, all the striking characteristicks of Milton: his affectionate sensibility, his superiour imagination, and all that native tendency to devotional enthusiasm,

> " Which sets the heart on fire
> To spurn the sordid world, and unto Heaven aspire."

Admirably trained as the youth of the poet was to acquire academical honour by the union of industry and talents, he seems to have experienced at Cambridge a checkered fortune, very similar to his destiny in the world. It appears from some remarkable paſsages in his Latin exercises, which he recited in his college, that he was at first an object of partial severity, and afterwards of general admiration. He had differed in opinion concerning a plan of academical study with some persons of authority in his college, and thus excited their displeasure. He speaks of them as highly incensed against him; but expreſses, with the most liberal sensibility, his surprise, delight, and gratitude, in finding that his enemies forgot their animosity, to honour him with unexpected applause.

An idle story has been circulated concerning his treatment in college. " I am ashamed," says Doctor Johnson, " to relate what I fear is true, that Milton was the last student in either university that suffered the public indignity of corporal punishment." In confirmation of this

incident, which appears improbable, though supported by Mr. Warton, the biographical critick alleges the following paſsage from the first elegy:—

Jam nunc arundiferum mihi cura revisere Camum,
Nec dudum vetiti me laris angit amor.—
Nec duri libet usque minas perferre magistri,
Cæteraque ingenio non subeunda meo.

Nor zeal nor duty now my steps impel
To reedy Cam, and my forbidden cell.—
'Tis time that I a pedant's threats disdain,
And fly from wrongs my soul will ne'er sustain.

Doctor Johnson considers these expreſsions as an absolute proof, that Milton was obliged to undergo this indignity; but they may suggest a very different idea. From all the light we can obtain concerning this anecdote, it seems most probable that Milton was threatened indeed with what he considered as unmerited and dishonourable punishment, that his manly spirit disdained to submit to it; and he was therefore obliged to acquiesce in a short exile from Cambridge.

In speaking of his academical life, it is neceſsary to obviate another remark of his biographical adversary.

"There is reason," says Johnson, "to suspect, that he was regarded in his college with no great fondneſs." To counteract this invidious insinuation, we are furnished with a reply made by Milton himself to this very calumny, originally fabricated by one of his contemporaries; a calumny which he had so fully refuted, that it ought not again to have been revived. He begins with thanking his reviler for the aspersion:— "It has given me," says he, "an apt occasion to acknowledge publickly, with all grateful mind, that more than ordinary favour and respect, which I found above any of my equals at the hand of those courteous and learned men, the fellows of that college wherein I spent some years; who, at my parting, after I had taken two degrees, as the manner is,

signified many ways how much better it would content them that I would stay; as by letters full of kindneſs and loving respect, both before that time and long after, I was aſsured of their singular good affection towards me." Prose Works, Vol. I. p. 108, edit. 1738.

The Latin poems of Milton are yet entitled to more of our attention, because they exhibit lively proofs that he poſseſsed both tenderneſs and enthusiasm, those primary constituents of a poet, at an early period of life, and in the highest degree. They have additional value from making us acquainted with several interesting particulars of his youth, and many of his opinions, which must have had considerable influence on his conduct.

His sixth elegy, addreſsed to his bosom friend Charles Deodati, seems to be founded on the idea, which he may be said to have verified in his own conduct, that strict habits of temperance and virtue are highly conducive to the perfection of great poetical powers. To poets of a lighter claſs he recommends, with graceful pleasantry, much convivial enjoyment; but for those who aspire to epic renown, he prescribes ever the simple regimen of Pythagoras.

Ille quidem parce, Samii pro more magistri,
Vivat, et innocuos præbeat herba cibos:
Stet prope fagineo pellucida lympha catillo,
Sobriaque e puro pocula fonte bibat.
Additur huic scelerisque vacans, et casta juventus,
Et rigidi mores, et sine labe manus.
Qualis veste nitens sacra, et lustralibus undis,
Surgis ad infensos augur iture deos.

Simply let these, like him of Samos live;
Let herbs to them a bloodleſs banquet give:
In beechen goblets let their beverage shine,
Cool from the crystal spring, their sober wine!
Their youth should paſs in innocence, secure
From stain licentious, and in manners pure;

Pure as heaven's minister, array'd in white,
Propitiating the gods with lustral rite.

In his elegy on the spring our poet expreſses the fervent emotions of his fancy, in terms that may be almost regarded as a prophetick description of his sublimest work.

Jam mihi mens liquidi raptatur in ardua cœli,
Perque vagas nubes corpore liber eo.—
Intuiturque animus toto quid agatur Olympo,
Nec fugiunt oculos Tartara cæca meos.

I mount, and undepreſs'd by cumbrous clay,
Through cloudy regions win my easy way:
My spirit searches all the realms of light,
And no Tartarean depths elude my sight.

With these verses it may be pleasing to compare a similar paſsage in his English vacation exercise; where, addreſsing his native language as applied to an inconsiderable purpose, he adds,

Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,
Thy service in some graver subject use:
Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,
Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound;
Such where the deep transported mind may soar
Above the wheeling poles, and at heaven's door
Look in, and see each blisful deity,
How he before the thunderous throne doth lie.

"It is worth the curious reader's attention, to observe how much the Paradise Lost corresponds with this prophetick wish," says Mr. Thyer, one of the most intelligent and liberal of English commentators.

The young poet who thus expreſsed his ambition, was then in his

nineteenth year. At the age of twenty-one (the period of his life when that pleasing portrait of him was executed which the speaker, Onslow, obtained from the executors of his widow) he composed his ode on the Nativity; a poem that surpaſses in fancy and devotional enthusiasm a composition on the same subject, by that celebrated and devout poet of Spain, Lopez de Vega.

The most trifling performances of Milton are so singular, that we may regret even the loſs of the verses alluded to by Aubrey as the offspring of his childhood. Perhaps no juvenile author ever displayed with such early force,

" The spirit of a youth
Who means to be of note."

His mind, even in his boyish days, seems to have glowed, like the fancy and furnace of an alchymist, with inceſsant hope and preparation for astonishing productions.

Such austerity and moroseneſs have been falsely attributed to Milton, that a reader acquainted with him, only as he appears in the page of Johnson, must suppose him little formed for love. But his poetry in general, and especially the compositions we are now speaking of, may convince us, that he felt with the most exquisite sensibility the magick of beauty, and all the force of female attraction. His seventh elegy exhibits a lively picture of his first paſsion: he represents himself as captivated by an unknown fair; who, though he saw her but for a moment, made a deep impreſsion on his heart.

Protinus insoliti subierunt corda furores,
Uror amans intus, flammaque totus eram.
Interea misero quæ jam mihi sola placebat,
Ablata est oculis non reditura meis.
Ast ego progredior tacite querebundus, et excors,
Et dubius volui sæpe referre pedem.
Findor, et hæc remanet; sequitur pars altera votum,
Raptaque tam subito gaudia flere juvat.



JOHN MILTON Ætat 21.

From the Original Picture on the Restoration of Lord Clarendon in Surrey

purchased from the Executors of Alderman Atkins by Thomas Thistlethwaite Esq.
speaker of the House of Commons, and presented on the same day
as this, to the Earl of Clarendon.

Published 1 June 1794. by John & Josiah Boydell & George Nicol.

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JOHN MILTON Esqr 21.

From the Original Picture in the Possession of
Lord Bridgewater
at Ellesmere in Shropshire.

purchased from the Executors of Mistress Whitehall Daughter Christopher Milton Esqr late Master of the Faculties & Secretary for Foreign Tongues to Oliver Cromwell as certified on the Frame thereof according to the Truth of the Picture.

Published 2 June 1794 by John & Josiah Boydell & George Nicol.

A fever, new to me, of fierce desire
Now seized my soul, and I was all on fire.
But she the while, whom only I adore,
Was gone, and vanish'd to appear no more.
In silent sorrow I pursue my way;
I pause, I turn, proceed, yet wish to stay;
And while I follow her in thought, bemoan
With tears my soul's delight so quickly flown.

The juvenile poet then addreſses himself to love, with a request that beautifully expreſses all the inquietude, and all the irresolution of hopeleſs attachment.

Deme meos tandem, verum nec deme, furores,
Nescio cur, miser est suaviter omnis amans.

Remove, no, grant me still this raging woe,
Sweet is the wretchedneſs that lovers know.

After having contemplated the youthful fancy of Milton under the influence of a sudden and vehement affection, let us survey him in a different point of view, and admire the purity and vigour of mind which he exerted at the age of twenty-three, in meditation on his past and his future days.

To a friend, who had remonstrated with him on his delay to enter upon active life, he ascribes that delay to an intense desire of rendering himself more fit for it. "Yet," he says, "that you may see that I am something suspicious of myselfe, and doe take notice of a certain belatedneſse in me, I am the bolder to send you some of my nightward thoughts some while since, because they come in not altogether unfitly, made up in a Petrarchian stanza, which I told you of:

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three and twentieth year!

My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blosom shew'th.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
That I to manhood am arrived so near,
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits indueth.
Yet be it less or more, or soon, or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Towards which time leads me, and the will of Heaven;
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task-master's eye."

This sonnet may be regarded, perhaps, as a refutation of that injurious criticism, which has told us, "the best sonnets of Milton are entitled only to this negative commendation, that they are not bad:" but it has a superiour value, which induced me to insert it here, as it seems to reveal the ruling principle which gave bias and energy to the mind and conduct of Milton; I mean the habit which he so early adopted of considering himself

As ever in his great Task-master's eye.

It was perhaps the force and permanency with which this persuasion was impressed upon his heart, that enabled him to ascend the sublimest highths both of genius and of virtue.

When Milton began his course of academical study, he had views of soon entering the church, "to whose service," he says, "by the intentions of my parents and friends, I was destined of a child, and in mine own resolutions." It was a religious scruple that prevented him from taking orders; and though his mode of thinking may be deemed erroneous, there is a refined and hallowed probity in his conduct on this occasion that is entitled to the highest esteem; particularly when we consider, that although he declined the office of a minister, he devoted himself, with intense application, to what he considered as the interest of true religion. The sincerity and fervour, with which he speaks on this

topick, must be applauded by every candid person, however differing from him in points that relate to our religious establishment. " For me," says this zealous and disinterested advocate for simple Christianity, " I have determined to lay up, as the best treasure and solace of a good old age, if God vouchsafe it me, the honest liberty of free speech from my youth, where I shall think it available in so dear a concernment as the church's good." In the polemical writings of Milton, there is a merit to which few polemicks can pretend: they were the pure dictates of conscience, and produced by the sacrifice of his favourite pursuits: this he has stated himself, in a very forcible and interesting passage of his treatise on Church Government, which the mention of his early design to take orders has led me to anticipate. Having pafsed seven years at Cambridge, and taken his two degrees, that of bachelor in 1628, and that of master in 1632, he was admitted to the same degree at Oxford in 1635. On quitting an academical life, he was, according to his own testimony, regretted by the fellows of his college; but he regarded the house of his father as a retreat favourable to his literary pursuits; and at the age of twenty-four, he gladly shared the rural retirement, in which his parents had recently settled at Horton, in Buckinghamshire. Here he devoted himself for five years to study, with that ardour and perseverance, to which, as he says himself in a letter to his friend Charles Deodati, his nature forcibly inclined him. The letter I am speaking of, was written in the last year of his residence under the roof of his father, and exhibits a lively picture of his progrefs in learning, his pafsion for virtue, and his hope of renown.

" To give you an account of my studies," he says, " I have brought down the affairs of the Greeks, in a continued course of reading, to the period in which they ceased to be Greeks; I have long been engaged in the obscurer parts of Italian history, under the Lombards, the Franks, and the Germans, to the time in which liberty was granted them by the emperor Rodolphus: from this point I think it best to pursue, in separate histories, the exploits of each particular city."

He shews himself in this letter most pafsionately attached to the Platonick philosophy; " as to other points, what God may have deter-

mined for me, I know not; but this I know, that if he ever instilled an intense love of moral beauty into the breast of any man, he has instilled it into mine. Ceres, in the fable, pursued not her daughter with a greater keenneſs of inquiry than I, day and night, the idea of perfection. Hence, wherever I find a man despising the false estimates of the vulgar, and daring to aspire, in sentiment, language, and conduct, to what the highest wisdom through every age has taught us as most excellent, to him I unite myself by a sort of necessary attachment: and if I am so influenced by nature or destiny, that by no exertion or labours of my own, I may exalt myself to this summit of worth and honour, yet no powers of heaven or earth will hinder me from looking with reverence and affection upon those, who have thoroughly attained this glory, or appear engaged in the succeſsful pursuit of it.

"You inquire with a kind solicitude even into my thoughts. Hear then, Deodati, but let me whisper in your ear, that I may not blush at my reply; I think, so help me Heaven! of immortality. You inquire also what I am about; I nurse my wings, and meditate a flight; but my Pegasus rises as yet on very tender pinions: let us be humbly wise."

This very interesting epistle, in which Milton pours forth his heart to the favourite friend of his youth, may convince every candid reader, that he poſseſsed, in no common degree, two qualities very rarely united, ambitious ardour of mind, and unaffected modesty. The poet, who speaks with such graceful humility of his literary achievements, had at this time written Comus, a composition that abundantly displays the variety and compaſs of his poetical powers. After he had delineated with equal excellence the frolicks of gaiety and the triumphs of virtue; paſsing with exquisite transition from the most sportive to the sublimest tones of poetry, he might have spoken more confidently of his own productions without a particle of arrogance. We know not exactly what poems he composed during his residence at Horton. The Arcades seems to have been one of his early compositions, and was intended as a compliment to his fair neighbour, the accomplished Counteſs Dowager of Derby: she was the sixth daughter of Sir John Spenser, and allied to Spenser the poet, who, with his usual mild and modest tenderneſs, has

celebrated her under the title of Amaryllis. At the house of this lady, near Uxbridge, Milton is said to have been a frequent visiter. The Earl of Bridgewater, before whom, and by whose children Comus was represented, had married a daughter of Ferdinando, Earl of Derby; and thus, as Mr. Warton observes, it was for the same family that Milton wrote both the Arcades and Comus. It is probable, that the pleasure which the Arcades afforded to the young relations of the countefs gave rise to Comus; as Lawes, the musical friend of Milton, in dedicating the mask to the young Lord Brackley, her grandson, says, "This poem, which received its first occasion of birth from yourself, and others of your noble family, and much honour from your own person in the performance."

These expreſsions of Lawes allude, perhaps, to the real incident which is said to have supplied the subject of Comus, and may seem to confirm an anecdote related by Mr. Warton, from a manuscript of Oldys, that the young and noble performers in this celebrated drama, were really involved in adventures very similar to their theatrical situation; that in visiting their relations in Herefordshire they were benighted in a forest, and the Lady Alice Egerton actually lost.

Whatever might have been the origin of the mask, the modesty of the youthful poet appears very conspicuous in the following words of Lawes's dedication: "Although not openly acknowledged by the author, yet it is a legitimate offspring, so lovely, and so much desired, that the often copying it hath tired my pen to give my several friends satisfaction, and brought me to a neceſsity of producing it to the publick view."

Milton discovered a similar diffidence respecting his Lycidas, which was written while he resided with his father, in November, 1637. This exquisite poem, which, as Mr. Warton justly observes, must have been "either solicited as a favour by those whom the poet had left in his college, or as a voluntary contribution of friendship sent to them from the country," appeared first in the academical collection of verses on the death of Mr. Edward King, and was subscribed only with the initials of its author.

That animated and benevolent veteran of criticism, Doctor Warton,

has considered a relish for the Lycidas as a test of true taste in poetry; and it certainly is a test, which no lover of Milton will be inclined to dispute, though it must exclude from the list of accomplished criticks that intemperate censor of the great poet, who has endeavoured to destroy the reputation of this celebrated monody with the most insulting expressions of sarcastick contempt. Expreſsions that no reader of a spirit truly poetical can peruse, without mingled emotions of indignation and of pity. But the charms of Lycidas are of a texture too firm to be annihilated by the breath of derision; and though Doctor Johnson has declared the poem to be utterly destitute both of nature and of art, it will aſsuredly continue to be admired as long as tenderneſs, imagination, and harmony are regarded as genuine sources of poetical delight. The effect of this favourite composition is exactly such as the poet intended to produce: it first engages the heart with the simplicity of just and natural sorrow, and then proceeds to elevate the mind with magnificent images, ennobled by affectionate and devotional enthusiasm.

The beauties of this pathetick and sublime monody are sufficiently obvious: but the reader who compares it with a poem on the same subject by Cleveland, once the popular rival of Milton, may derive pleasure from perceiving how infinitely our favourite poet has excelled on this occasion an eminent antagonist.

Though we find no circumstances that may ascertain the date of the Allegro and Penseroso, it seems probable that those two enchanting pictures of rural life, and of the diversified delights arising from a contemplative mind, were composed at Horton. It was perhaps in the same situation, so favourable to poetical exertions, that Milton wrote the incomparable Latin poem addreſsed to his father: there are, indeed, some expreſsions in this performance, which may favour an opinion that it ought to bear an earlier date; but it has such strength and manlineſs of sentiment, as incline me to suppose it written at this period; an idea that seems almost confirmed by the lines that speak of his application to French and Italian, after the completion of his claſsical studies. Whatever date may be aſsigned to it, the composition deserves our particular regard, since of all his poems it does the highest honour to his heart.

With what energy and tenderneſs is his filial gratitude expreſsed in the following graceful exordium?

Nunc mea Pierios cupiam per pectora fontes
Irriguas torquere vias, totumque per ora
Volvere laxatum gemino de vertice rivum;
Ut tenues oblita sonos, audacibus alis
Surgat in officium venerandi musa parentis.
Hoc utcunque tibi gratum, pater optime, carmen
Exiguum meditatur opus: nec novimus ipsi
Aptius a nobis quæ poſsint munera donis
Respondere tuis, quamvis nec maxima poſsint
Respondere tuis, nedum ut par gratia donis
Eſse queat, vacuis quæ redditur arida verbis.

O that Pieria's spring would through my breast
Pour its inspiring influence, and rush
No rill, but rather an o'erflowing flood!
That for my venerable father's sake,
All meaner themes renounced, my muse, on wings
Of duty borne, might reach a loftier strain!
For thee, my father, howsoe'er it please,
She frames this slender work; nor know I aught
That may thy gifts more suitably requite,
Though to requite them suitably, would ask
Returns much nobler, and surpaſsing far
The meagre gifts of verbal gratitude.

How elegant is the praise he bestows on the musical talents of his father! and how pleasing the exulting and affectionate spirit with which he speaks of their social and kindred studies!

Nec tu pèrge, precor, sacras contemnere musas,
Nec vanas inopesque puta, quarum ipse peritus

Munere, mille sonos numeros componis ad aptos,
Millibus et vocem modulis variare canoram
Doctus, Arionii merito sis nominis hæres.
Nunc tibi quid mirum, si me genuisse poetam
Contigerit, charo si tam prope sanguine juncti,
Cognatas artes, studiumque affine sequamur?
Ipse volens Phœbus se dispertire duobus,
Altera dona mihi, dedit altera dona parenti;
Dividuumque Deum, genitorque puerque, tenemus.
Tu tamen ut simules teneras odisse Camœnas,
Non odisse reor; neque enim, pater, ire jubebas
Qua via lata patet, qua pronior area lucri,
Certaque condendi fulget spes aurea nummi:
Nec rapis ad leges, male custoditaque gentis
Jura, nec insulsis damnas clamoribus aures;
Sed magis excultam cupiens ditescere mentem,
Me procul urbano strepitu, secessibus altis
Abductum, Aoniæ jucunda per otia ripæ,
Phœbæo lateri comitem sinis ire beatum.

Nor thou persist, I pray thee, still to slight
The sacred nine, and to imagine vain
And useless powers, by whom inspired, thyself
Art skilful to associate verse with airs
Harmonious, and to give the human voice
A thousand modulations, heir by right
Indisputable of Arion's fame.
Now say what wonder is it, if a son
Of thine delight in verse, if so conjoin'd
In close affinity, we sympathize
In social arts, and kindred studies sweet?
Such distribution of himself to us
Was Phœbus' choice: thou hast thy gift, and I
Mine also, and between us we receive,

Father and son, the whole inspiring god.
No! howsoe'er the semblance thou aſsume
Of hate, thou hatest not the gentle muse,
My father! for thou never badest me tread
The beaten path and broad, that leads right on
To opulence, nor didst condemn thy son
To the insipid clamours of the bar,
To laws voluminous, and ill observed;
But wishing to enrich me more, to fill
My mind with treasure, led'st me far away
From civick din, to deep retreats, to banks,
And streams Aonian, and with free consent
Didst place me, happy, at Apollo's side.

The poet seems to have had a prophetick view of the singular calumnies that awaited his reputation, and to have anticipated his triumph over all his adversaries, in the following magnanimous exclamation:

Este procul vigiles Curæ, procul este Querelæ,
Invidiæque acies transverso tortilis hirquo,
Sæva nec anguiferos extende Calumnia rictus,
In me triste nihil fœdiſsima turba, potestis,
Nec vestri sum juris ego: securaque tutus
Pectora, vipereo gradiar sublimis ab ictu.

Away then sleepleſs Care, Complaint away,
And Envy with thy jealous leer malign,
Nor let the monster Calumny shoot forth
Her venom'd tongue at me. Detested foes!
Ye all are impotent against my peace,
For I am privileged; and bear my breast
Safe, and too high for your viperean wound.

After this high-toned burst of confidence and indignation, how sweetly

the poet sinks again into the tender notes of gratitude, in the close of this truly filial composition!

At tibi, chare pater, postquam non æqua merenti
Poſse referre datur, nec dona rependere factis,
Sit memoraſse satis, repetitaque munera grato
Percensere animo, fidæque reponere menti.
Et vos, o nostri, juvenilia carmina, lusus,
Si modo perpetuos sperare audebitis annos,
Et domini supereſse rogo, lucemque tueri,
Nec spiſso rapient oblivia nigra sub Orco;
Forsitan has laudes, decantatumque parentis
Nomen, ad exemplum, sero servabitis ævo.

But thou, my father, since to render thanks
Equivalent, and to requite by deeds
Thy liberality, exceeds my power,
Suffice it that I thus record thy gifts,
And bear them treasured in a grateful mind.
Ye too, the favourite pastime of my youth,
My voluntary numbers, if ye dare
To hope longevity, and to survive
Your master's funeral, not soon absorb'd
In the oblivious Lethean gulf,
Shall to futurity, perhaps, convey
This theme, and by these praises of my sire
Improve the fathers of a distant age.

"He began now," says Johnson, "to grow weary of the country, and had some purpose of taking chambers in the inns of court."

This wearineſs appears to have existed only in the fancy of his biographer: during the five years that Milton resided with his parents in Buckinghamshire he had occasional lodgings in London, which he visited, as he informs us himself, for the purpose of buying books, and

improving himself in mathematicks, and in musick, at that time his favourite amusements. The letter, which intimates his intention of taking chambers in the inns of court, was not written from the country, as his biographer seems to have supposed; it is dated from London, and only expreſses, that his quarters there appeared to him awkward and inconvenient.

On the death of his mother, who died in April 1637, and is buried in the chancel of Horton church, he obtained his father's permiſsion to gratify his eager desire of visiting the continent; a permiſsion the more readily granted perhaps, as one of his motives for visiting Italy was to form a collection of Italian musick.

Having received some directions for his travels from the celebrated Sir Henry Wotton, he went with a single servant to Paris, in 1638. He was here honoured by the notice of Lord Scudamore, the English ambaſsadour, who, at his earnest desire, gave him an introduction to Grotius, then residing at Paris as the minister of Sweden.

Curiosity is naturally excited by the idea of a conference between two persons so eminent and accomplished: it has been conjectured that Milton might conceive his first design of writing a tragedy on the banishment of Adam, from this interview with Grotius; but if the Adamus Exsul of the Swedish ambaſsadour were a subject of their discourse, it is probable its author must have spoken of it but slightly, as a juvenile composition, since he does so in a letter to his friend Voſsius in 1616, concerning a new edition of his poetry, from which he particularly excludes this sacred drama, as too puerile, in his own judgment, to be republished.

The letters of Grotius, voluminous and circumstantial as they are, afford no traces of this interesting visit; but they lead me to imagine, that the point which the learned ambaſsadour most warmly recommended to Milton, on his departure for Italy, was to pay the kindest attention in his power to the sufferings of Galileo, then persecuted as a prisoner by the inquisition in Florence.

In a letter to Voſsius, dated in the very month when Milton was probably introduced to Grotius, that liberal friend to science and humanity

speaks thus of Galileo: "This old man, to whom the universe is so deeply indebted, worn out with maladies, and still more with anguish of mind, gives us little reason to hope that his life can be long: common prudence therefore suggests to us to make the utmost of the time, while we can yet avail ourselves of such an instructor." Milton was of all travellers the most likely to seize a hint of this kind with avidity: and expreſsions in Paradise Lost have led an Italian biographer of the poet to suppose, that while he resided at Florence he caught from Galileo, or his disciples, some ideas approaching towards the Newtonian philosophy. He has informed us himself, that he really saw the illustrious scientific prisoner of the inquisition; and it seems not unreasonable to conclude, that he was in some degree indebted to his conference with Grotius for that mournful gratification.

From Paris our author proceeded to Italy, embarking at Nice for Genoa: after a cursory view of Leghorn and Pisa, he settled for two months at Florence; a city which he particularly regarded for the elegance of its language, and the men of genius it had produced. Here, as he informs us, he became familiar with many persons distinguished by their rank and learning; and here probably he began to form those great but unsettled projects of future composition, which were to prove the sources of his glory, and of which he thus speaks himself.

"In the private academies of Italy, whither I was favoured to resort, perceiving that some trifles I had in memory, composed at under twenty, or thereabout, (for the manner is, that every one must give some proof of his wit and reading there) met with acceptance above what was looked for, and other things, which I had shifted, in scarcity of books and conveniences, to patch up amongst them, were received with written encomiums, which the Italian is not forward to bestow on men of this side the Alps: I began thus far to aſsent both to them, and divers of my friends here at home, and not leſs to an inward prompting, which now grew daily upon me, that by labour and intent study (which I take to be my portion in this life), joined with the strong propensity of nature, I might perhaps leave something so written to after times, as they should not willingly let it die. These thoughts at once poſseſsed me, and these

other; that if I were certain to write as men buy leases, for three lives and downward, there ought no regard to be sooner had than to God's glory, by the honour and instruction of my country. For which cause, and not only for that I knew it would be hard to arrive at the second rank among the Latins, I applied myself to that resolution, which Ariosto followed against the persuasions of Bembo, to fix all the industry and art I could unite to the adorning of my native tongue; not to make verbal curiosities the end (that were a toilsome vanity), but to be an interpreter and relater of the best and sagest things among mine own citizens throughout this island, in the mother dialect: that what the greatest and choicest wits of Athens, Rome, or modern Italy, and those Hebrews of old did for their country, I, in my proportion, with this over and above, of being a Christian, might do for mine; not caring to be once named abroad, though perhaps I could attain to that, but content with these British islands as my world." Prose Works, Dr. Birch's edit. Vol. I. p. 62.

It is delightful to contemplate such a character as Milton, thus cherishing in his own mind the seeds of future greatnefs, and animating his youthful spirit with visions of renown, that time has realized and extended beyond his most sanguine wishes. He appears, on every occasion, a sincere and fervent lover of his country, and expreſses, in one of his Latin poems, the same patriotic idea, that he should be satisfied with glory confined to these islands.

——Mi satis ampla
Merces, et mihi grande decus, (sim ignotus in ævum
Tum licet, externo penitusque inglorius orbi)
Si me flava comas legat Usa, et potor Alauni,
Vorticibusque frequens Abra, et nemus omne Treantæ,
Et Thamesis meus ante omnes, et fusca metallis
Tamara, et extremis me discant Orcades undis.
Epitaphium Damonis.

And it shall well suffice me, and shall be
Fame, and proud recompense enough for me,

If Usa, golden hair'd, my verse may learn,
If Alain, bending o'er his crystal urn,
Swift whirling Abra, Trent's o'ershadow'd stream,
If, lovelier far than all in my esteem,
Thames, and the Tamar, tinged with mineral hues,
And northern Orcades regard my muse.

In tracing the literary ambition of Milton, from the first conception of his great purposes to their accomplishment, we seem to participate in the triumph of his genius, which, though it aspired only to the praise of these British islands, is already grown an object of universal admiration, and may find hereafter in the western world the amplest theatre of his glory.

Doctor Johnson takes occasion from the paſsage, in which Milton speaks of the literary projects he conceived in Italy, to remark, that " he had a lofty and steady confidence in himself, perhaps not without some contempt of others." The latter part of this observation is evidently invidious; it is completely refuted by the various commendations, which the graceful and engaging manners of the poetical traveller received from the Italians. A contemptuous spirit indeed appears utterly incompatible with the native disposition of Milton, whose generous enthusiasm led him to conceive the fondest veneration for all who were distinguished by genius or virtue; a disposition which he has expreſsed in the strongest terms, as the reader may recollect, in a letter already cited to his friend Deodati. His prejudiced biographer endeavours to prove that his spirit was contemptuous, by observing, that he was " frugal of his praise:" the argument is particularly defective as applied to Milton on his travels, since the praises he bestowed on those accomplished foreigners, who were kind to him, are liberal in the highest degree, and apparently dictated by the heart.

After a short visit to Sienna, he resided two months in Rome, enjoying the most refined society which that city could afford. By the favour of Holstenius, the well known librarian of the Vatican, whose kindneſs to him he has recorded in a Latin epistle, equally grateful and elegant,

he was recommended to the notice of Cardinal Barberini, who honoured him with the most flattering attention. It was at the concerts of the cardinal that he was captivated by the charms of Leonora Baroni, whose extraordinary musical powers he has celebrated in Latin verse; and whom he is supposed to addreſs as a lover, in his Italian poetry. The most eloquent of the paſsions, which is said to convert almost every man who feels it into a poet, induced the imagination of Milton to try its powers in a foreign language, whose difficulties he seems perfectly to have subdued by the united aids of genius and of love.

His Italian sonnets have been liberally commended by natives of Italy; and one of them contains a sketch of his own character, so spirited and singular as to claim a place in this narrative.

Giovane piano, e simplicetto amante
Poi che fuggir me ſteſso in dubbio sono,
Madonna a voi del mio cuor l'humil dono
Farò divoto: io certo a prove tante
L'hebbi fedele, intrepido, costante,
De pensieri leggiadro, accorto, e buono;
Quando rugge il gran mondo, e scocca il tuono,
S'arma di se, e d'intero diamante,
Tanto del forse, e d'invidia sicuro,
Di timori, e speranze al popol use
Quanto d'ingegno, e d'alto valor vago,
E di cetta sonora, e delle muse:
Sol troverete in tal parte men duro
Ove Amor mise l'insanabil ago.

Enamour'd, artleſs, young, on foreign ground,
Uncertain whither from myself to fly,
To thee, dear lady, with an humble sigh
Let me devote my heart; which I have found
By certain proofs, not few, intrepid, sound,

Good, and addicted to conceptions high:
When tempest shakes the world and fires the sky,
It rests in adamant self-wrapt around,
As safe from envy, and from outrage rude,
From hopes and fears, that vulgar minds abuse,
As fond of genius, and fix'd fortitude,
Of the resounding lyre, and every muse:
Weak you will find it, in one only part,
Now pierced by Love's immedicable dart.

It was at Rome that Milton was complimented in Latin verse, by Selvaggi and Salsilli; his reply to the latter, then suffering from a severe malady, is so remarkable for its elegance, tenderneſs, and spirit, that Mr. Warton praises it as one of the finest lyrical compositions which the Latin poetry of modern times can exhibit.

The circumstances that happened to our author in his travels, and indeed the most striking particulars of his life, are related by himself, in his second Defence: he there tells us, that in paſsing from Rome to Naples, his fellow traveller was a hermit, who introduced him to Baptista Manso, Marquis of Villa, an accomplished nobleman, and singularly distinguished as the friend and the biographer of two eminent poets, Taſso and Marini. They have both left poetical memorials of their esteem for the marquis, who acquired his title, as a soldier, in the service of Spain; but retiring early, with considerable wealth, to Naples, his native city, he founded there a literary academy, and lived in splendour as its president.

This graceful and venerable hero, whose politeneſs and learning had been fondly celebrated by Taſso, in a dialogue on friendship, that bears the name of Manso, was near eighty when Milton became his guest. He seems to have been endeared to the imagination of our poet by the liberal and affectionate tribute he had paid to the memory of his illustrious poetical friends; a tribute very feelingly described by Milton in the following lines, addreſsed to the noble and generous biographer. They speak first of Marini:

Ille itidem moriens tibi soli debita vates
Oſsa, tibi soli, supremaque vota reliquit:
Nec manes pietas tua chara fefellit amici;
Vidimus arridentem operoso ex ære poetam.
Nec satis hoc visum est in utrumque, et nec pia ceſsant
Officia in tumulo; cupis integros rapere Orco,
Qua potes, atque avidas Parcarum eludere leges:
Amborum genus, et varia sub sorte peractam
Describis vitam, moresque, et dona Minervæ;
Æmulus illius, Mycalen qui natus ad altam,
Rettulit Æolii vitam facundus Homeri.

To thee alone the poet would entrust
His latest vows, to thee alone his dust;
And thou, with punctual piety, hast paid
In labour'd brafs thy tribute to his shade:
Nor this contented thee; thy zeal would save
Thy bards uninjured from the whelming grave.
In more enduring history to live
An endleſs life, is also thine to give;
And thou hast given it them; and deign'd to teach
The manners, fortunes, lives, and gifts of each;
Rival to him whose pen, to nature true,
The life of Homer eloquently drew.

If the two Latin verses in which this amiable old man expreſsed his admiration of the young English bard deserve the name of "a sorry distich," which Johnson bestows upon them, they still present Milton to our fancy in a most favourable light. A traveller so little distinguished by birth or opulence, would hardly have obtained even such a compliment from a nobleman of Manso's experience, age, and dignity, had he not been peculiarly formed to engage the good opinion and courtesy of strangers, by the expreſsive comelineſs of his person, the elegance of his manners, and the charm of his conversation.

" In Manso," says Milton, " I found a most friendly guide, who shewed me himself the curiosities of Naples, and the palace of the vice-roy. He came more than once to visit me, while I continued in that city; and when I left it, he earnestly excused himself, that although he greatly wished to render me more good offices, he was unable to do so in Naples, because, in my religion, I had disdained all disguise."

Pleasing and honourable as the civilities were that our young countryman received from this Nestor of Italy, he has amply repaid them in a poem, which, to the honour of English gratitude and English genius, we may justly pronounce superiour to the compliments bestowed on this engaging character by the two celebrated poets, who wrote in his own language, and were peculiarly attached to him.

Of the five sonnets, indeed, that Taſso addreſsed to his courteous and liberal friend, two are very beautiful; but even these are surpaſsed, both in energy and tenderneſs, by the following conclusion of the verses inscribed to Manso by Milton.

Diis dilecte senex, te Jupiter æquus oportet
Nascentem, et miti lustrarit lumine Phœbus,
Atlantisque nepos; neque enim, nisi charus ab ortu
Diis superis, poterit magno faviſse poetæ.
Hinc longæva tibi lento sub flore senectus
Vernat, e Æsonios lucratur vivida fusos;
Nondum deciduos servans tibi frontis honores,
Ingeniumque vigens, et adultum mentis acumen.
O mihi si mea sors talem concedat amicum,
Phœbæos decoraſse viros qui tam bene norit,
Si quando indigenas revocabo in carmina reges,
Arturumque etiam sub terris bella moventem!
Aut dicam invictæ sociali fœdere mensæ
Magnanimos heroas; et, o modo spiritus adsit,
Frangam Saxonicas Britonum sub Marte phalanges!
Tandem ubi non tacitæ permensus tempora vitæ,
Annorumque satur, cineri sua jura relinquam,

Ille mihi lecto madidis astaret ocellis,
Astanti sat erit si dicam, sim tibi curæ!
Ille meos artus, liventi morte solutos,
Curaret parva componi molliter urna:
Forsitan et nostros ducat de marmore vultus,
Nectens aut Paphia myrti aut Parnaſside lauri
Fronde comas, at ego secura pace quiescam.
Tum quoque, si qua fides, si præmia certa bonorum,
Ipse ego cœlicolum semotus in æthera divum,
Quo labor et mens pura vehunt, atque ignea virtus,
Secreti hæc aliqua mundi de parte videbo,
Quantum fata sinunt, et tota mente serenum
Ridens, purpureo suffundar lumine vultus,
Et simul æthereo plaudam mihi lætus Olympo.

Well may we think, O dear to all above!
Thy birth distinguish'd by the smile of Jove;
And that Apollo shed his kindliest power,
And Maia's son on that propitious hour;
Since only minds so born can comprehend
A poet's worth, or yield that worth a friend.
Hence on thy yet unfaded cheek appears
The lingering freshneſs of thy greener years,
Hence in thy front and features we admire
Nature unwither'd, and a mind entire.
O might so true a friend to me belong,
So skill'd to grace the votaries of song!
Should I recall hereafter into rhyme
The kings and heroes of my native clime;
Arthur the chief, who even now prepares,
In subterraneous being, future wars,
With all his martial knights, to be restored
Each to his seat around the fed'ral board;

And O, if spirit fail me not, disperse
Our Saxon plunderers in triumphant verse.
Then after all, when, with the past content,
A life I finish, not in silence spent,
Should he, kind mourner, o'er my death-bed bend,
I shall but need to say, " be still my friend!"
He, faithful to my dust, with kind concern
Shall place it gently in a modest urn;
He too, perhaps, shall bid the marble breathe
To honour me, and with the graceful wreath
Or of Parnaſsus or the Paphian isle,
Shall bind my brows:—but I shall rest the while.
Then also, if the fruits of faith endure,
And virtue's promised recompense be sure,
Borne to those seats to which the bleſs'd aspire,
By purity of soul and virtuous fire,
These rites, as fate permits, I shall survey,
With eyes illumined by celestial day,
And, every cloud from my pure spirit driven,
Joy in the bright beatitude of Heaven.

The preceding verses have various claims to attention; they exhibit a lively picture of the literary project that occupied the mind of Milton at this period; they forcibly prove with what vehemence of desire he panted for poetical immortality, and for the superiour rewards of a laborious life, devoted to piety and virtue.

His acquaintance with Manso may be regarded as the most fortunate incident of his foreign excursion; nothing could have a greater tendency to preserve and strengthen the seeds of poetick enterprize in the mind of the young traveller, than his familiarity with this eminent and engaging personage, the bosom friend of Taſso; the friend, who had cherished that great and afflicted poet under his roof, in a season of his mental calamity; had restored his health, re-animated his fancy, and given a religious turn to the latest efforts of his majestick muse. The very life

of Taſso, which this noble biographer had written, with the copious and minute fidelity of personal knowledge, and with the ardour of affectionate enthusiasm, might be sufficient to give new energy to Milton's early paſsion for poetical renown: his conversation had probably a still greater tendency to produce this effect; circumstances remote, and apparently of little moment, have often a marvellous influence on works of imagination; nor is it too wild a conjecture to suppose, that the zeal of Manso in speaking to Milton of his departed friend, might give force and permanence to that literary ambition, which ultimately rendered his aspiring guest the great rival of Taſso, and, in the estimation of Englishmen, his superiour.

From Naples it was the design of Milton to paſs into Sicily and Greece; but receiving intelligence of the civil war in England, he felt it inconsistent with his principles to wander abroad, even for the improvement of his mind, while his countrymen were contending for liberty at home.

In preparing for his return to Rome, he was cautioned against it by some mercantile friends, whose letters intimated, that he had much to apprehend from the machinations of English Jesuits, if he appeared again in that city, who were incensed against him by the freedom of his discourse on topicks of religion. "I had made it a rule," says Milton, "never to start a religious subject in this country; but if I were questioned on my faith, never to diſsemble, whatever I might suffer. I returned, nevertheleſs, to Rome," continues the undaunted traveller, "and whenever I was interrogated, I attempted no disguise; if any one attacked my principles, I defended the true religion, in the very city of the Pope, and during almost two months, with as much freedom as I had used before: by the protection of God I returned safe again to Florence, revisiting friends, who received me as gladly as if I had been restored to my native home."

After a second residence of almost two months in Florence, whence he made an excursion to Lucca, (a place endeared to him by having produced the ancestors of his favourite friend Deodati) he extended his travels through Bologna and Ferrara to Venice. Here he

remained a month; and having sent hence a collection of books, and particularly of musick, by sea, he proceeded himself through Verona and Milan to Geneva.

In this city he was particularly gratified by the society and kindneſs of John Deodati, an eminent profeſsor of divinity, and uncle of his young friend, whose untimely death he lamented in a Latin poem, of which we shall soon have occasion to speak. Returning by his former road through France, he reached England at a period that seems to have made a strong impreſsion on his mind; when the king was waging, in favour of episcopacy, his unprosperous war with the Scots. The time of Milton's absence from his native country exceeded not, by his own account, a year and three months.

In the relation which he gives himself of his return, the name of Geneva recalling to his mind one of the most slanderous of his political adversaries, he animates his narrative by a solemn appeal to Heaven on his unspotted integrity; he protests that, during his residence in foreign scenes, where licentiousneſs was universal, his own conduct was perfectly irreproachable. I dwell the more zealously on whatever may elucidate the moral character of Milton, because even among those who love and revere him, the splendour of the poet has, in some measure, eclipsed the merit of the man; but in proportion as the particulars of his life are studied with intelligence and candour, his virtue will become, as it ought to be, the friendly rival of his genius, and receive its due share of admiration and esteem.

We have now attended him to the middle stage of his life; at which it may not be improper to pause, and make a few remarks on the years that are paſsed, and those that are yet in prospect. We behold him, at the age of thirty-two, recalled to England, from a foreign excursion of improvement and delight, by a manly sense of what he owed to his country in a season of difficulty and danger. His thoughts and conduct on this occasion are the more noble and becoming, as all his preceding years had been employed in forming, for the most important purposes, a firm and lofty mind; and in furnishing it abundantly with whatever might be useful and honourable to himself and others, in the various

exigencies and viciſsitudes both of private and publick life. We have traced him through a long course of infantine, academical, domestick, and foreign study; we have seen him distinguished by application, docility, and genius; uncommonly attached to his instructors, and most amiably grateful to his parents: in friendship ardent and steady; in love though tender, not intemperate; as a poet sensible of his rare mental endowments, yet peculiarly modest in regard to his own productions: enamoured of glory, yet as ready to bestow, as anxious to merit, praise: in his person and manners, so fashioned to prepoſseſs all men in his favour, that even foreigners gave him credit for those high literary achievements that were to shed peculiar lustre on his latter days, and considered him already as a man of whom his country might be proud.

With such accomplishments, and such expectations in his behalf, Milton returned to England. The subsequent portion of his life, however gloomy and tempestuous, will be found to correspond, at least in the close of it, with the radiant promise of his youth. We shall see him deserting his favourite haunts of Parnaſsus to enter the thorny paths of ecclesiastick and political diſsension: his principles as a disputant will be condemned and approved, according to the prevalence of opposite and irreconcileable opinions that fluctuate in the world; but his upright consistency of conduct deserves applause from all honest and candid men of every persuasion. The muse, indeed, who had bleſsed him with singular endowments, and given him so lively a sense of his being constituted a poet by nature, that when he wrote not verse, he had the use (to borrow his own forcible expreſsion) but of his left hand: the muse alone might have a right to reproach him with having acted against inward conviction; but could his muse have visibly appeared to reprove his desertion of her service, in a parental remonstrance, he might have answered her, as the young Harry of Shakspeare answers the tender and keen reproof of his royal father,

> I will redeem all this;
> And in the closing of some glorious day,
> Be bold to tell you, that I am your son.

# LIFE OF MILTON

## PART II.

The narrative may proceed from the information of Milton. On his return from the Continent he procured, he says, a residence in London, ample enough for himself and his books; and felt happy in renewing his interrupted studies. This first establishment, as we learn from his nephew, was a lodging in Saint Bride's churchyard, where he received as disciples, the two sons of his sister, John and Edward Philips. The latter is his biographer: but although he has written the life of his illustrious relation with a degree of laudable pride and affectionate spirit, he does not communicate that abundance of information which might have been expected from the advantage he poſseſsed. In one article his pride has a ludicrous effect, as it leads him into an awkward attempt to vindicate his uncle from the fancied opprobrium of having engaged profeſsionally in the education of youth; a profeſsion, which from its utility and importance, from the talents and virtues it requires, is unquestionably entitled to respect.

Philips will not allow that his uncle actually kept a school, as he taught only the sons of his particular friends. Johnson ridicules this distinction, and seems determined to treat Milton as a profeſsed schoolmaster, for the sake of attempting to prove, that he did not sustain the character with advantage, but adopted a vain and preposterous plan of education.

"Let me not be censured," says the Doctor, "as pedantick or paradoxical, for if I have Milton against me, I have Socrates on my side. It was his labour to turn philosophy from the study of nature to speculations upon life; but the innovators, whom I oppose, are turning off attention from life to nature. They seem to think that we are placed

here to watch the growth of plants, or the motions of the stars; Socrates was rather of opinion that what we had to learn, was how to do good, and avoid evil."

Οτ[ι τοι ἐν μεγάροισι κακόντ' ἀγαθόν[ε τέτυχ[αι.

This insidious artifice of representing Milton and Socrates as antagonists is peculiarly unfortunate, since no man appears to have imbibed the principles of Socratick wisdom more deeply than our poet. His regard and attachment to them is fervently expreſsed even in his juvenile letters; the very maxims of moral truth, which he is accused of counteracting, never shone with more lustre than in the following paſsage of the Paradise Lost.

> But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
> Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end,
> Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn,
> That not to know at large of things remote
> From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
> That, which before us lies in daily life,
> Is the prime wisdom; what is more is fume,
> Or emptineſs, or fond impertinence,
> And renders us, in things that most concern,
> Unpractised, unprepared, and still to seek.

These beautiful lines are built, in some measure, as Bentley has remarked, upon a verse of Homer; the very verse admired by Socrates, which Doctor Johnson has not scrupled to quote as a part of his singular ill-grounded attempt to prove, that Milton's ideas of education were in direct opposition to the great moralist of Greece, an attempt that arose from a very inoffensive boast of Milton's nephew, who gives a long list of books perused by the scholars of his uncle; which merely proves that they read more books than are usually read in our common schools, and that their diligent instructor thought it advisable for boys, as they approach towards sixteen, to blend a little knowledge of the sciences with their Greek and Latin.

That he taught the familiar and useful doctrine of the Attic philosopher, even in his lighter poetry, we have a pleasing instance in the following lines of his sonnet to Cyriac Skinner, who was one of his scholars.

To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
Toward solid good what leads the nearest way.

But his brief treatise addreſsed to Hartlib affords, perhaps, the best proof, that his ideas of moral discipline were perfectly in unison with those of Socrates: where he says, " I call a complete and generous education, that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously, all the offices, both private and publick, of peace and war." Who can define a good education in terms more truly Socratick?

Milton, however, in his attachment to morality, forgot not the claims of religion; his Sundays were devoted to theology, and Johnson duly praises the care with which he instructed his scholars in the primary duties of men.

With a critick so sincerely devout as Johnson unquestionably was, we might have hoped that the sublime piety of our author would have secured him from sarcastick attacks; but we have yet to notice two insults of this kind, which the acrimony of uncorrected spleen has lavished upon Milton as a preceptor.

" From this wonder-working academy," says the biographer, " I do not know that there ever proceeded any man very eminent for knowledge; its only genuine product, I believe, is a small history of poetry, written in Latin by his nephew, of which perhaps none of my readers ever heard." The contemptuous spirit and the inaccuracy of this sarcasm are equally remarkable. The scholars of Milton were far from being numerous; can it be just to speak with derision of a small academy, merely because it raises no celebrated author, when we consider how few of that description every nation produces? We know little of those who were under the tuition of our poet except his two nephews; these were both writers, and a biographer of Milton should not have utterly forgotten his obligations to Edward Philips, if he allowed no credit to his

brother, for the spirited Latin treatise in which that young man appeared as the defender of his uncle. But the striking inaccuracy of the critick consists in not mentioning a book that particularly claimed his attention, Philips's Theatrum Poetarum, a book that, under a Latin title, contains in English a very comprehensive list of poets, ancient and modern, with reflections upon many of them, particularly those of our own nation. It is remarkable that this book was licensed September 14, 1674, just two months before the death of Milton, and printed the following year. The author afsigns an article both to his uncle and his brother. After enumerating the chief works of the former, he modestly says, "how far he hath revived the majesty and true decorum of heroick poesy and tragedy, it will better become a person lefs related than myself to deliver his judgment."

Though he here suppreſses a desire to praise his most eminent relation, it bursts forth in an amiable manner when he comes to speak of his brother, for he calls him "the maternal nephew and disciple of an author of most deserved fame late deceased, being the exactest of heroick poets (if the truth were well examined, and it is the opinion of many both learned and judicious persons) either of the ancients or moderns, either of our own, or whatever nation else."

I transcribe with pleasure this honest and simple eulogy: it does credit to the intelligence and affection of the poet's disciple; and it in some measure vindicates the good sense of our country, by shewing that in the very year of Milton's decease, when some writers have supposed that his poetical merit was almost utterly unknown, there were persons in the nation who understood his full value.

Let us return to the author in his little academy, and the second sarcastick insult which his biographer has bestowed upon him as the master of a school. The lodging in which he settled on his arrival from the Continent, was soon exchanged for a more spacious house and garden in Aldersgate-street, that supplied him with conveniences for the reception of scholars. On this occasion Johnson exclaims, "Let not our veneration for Milton forbid us to look, with some degree of merriment, on great promises and small performance, on the man who hastens home,

because his countrymen are contending for their liberty, and when he reaches the scene of action, vapours away his patriotism in a private boarding-school."

To excite merriment by rendering Milton ridiculous, for having preferred the pen to the sword, was an enterprise that surpaſsed the powers of Johnson: the attempt affords a melancholy proof how far prejudice may mislead a very vigorous understanding. What but the blind hatred of bigotry could have tempted one great author to deride another, merely for having thought that he might serve his country more eſsentially by the rare and highly cultivated faculties of his mind, than by the ordinary service of a soldier. Milton has vindicated himself on this article in his second defence: we derive this advantage from the malice of his contemporaries, that it led him to speak publickly of himself, and to relate, in the most manly and explicit manner, the real motives of his conduct.

In the same composition, he frankly states the circumstances which prompted him to execute each particular work, that raised him to notice in his new field of controversy: but before we attend to the order in which he treated various publick questions that he considered of high moment to his country, it is just to observe his fidelity and tenderneſs in first discharging as a poet the duties of private friendship.

Before he quitted Florence, Milton received intelligence of the loſs he had to sustain by the untimely death of Charles Deodati, the favourite aſsociate of his early studies. On his arrival in England, the bitterneſs of such a loſs was felt with redoubled sensibility by his affectionate heart, which relieved and gratified itself by commemorating the engaging character of the deceased in a poem of considerable length, entitled Epitaphium Damonis; a poem mentioned by Johnson with supercilious contempt, yet poſseſsing such beauties as render it pre-eminent in that species of composition. Many poets have lamented a friend of their youth, and a companion of their studies, but no one has surpaſsed the affecting tenderneſs with which Milton speaks of his lost Deodati.

——Quis mihi fidus
Hærebit lateri comes, ut tu sæpe solebas

Frigoribus duris, et per loca fœta pruinis,
Aut rapido sub sole, siti morientibus herbis?
Pectora cui credam? quis me lenire docebit
Mordaces curas, quis longam fallere noctem
Dulcibus alloquiis, grato cum sibilat igni
Molle pyrum, et nucibus strepitat focus, et malus auster
Miscet cuncta foris, et desuper intonat ulmo?
Aut æstate, dies medio dum vertitur axe,
Cum Pan æsculea somnum capit abditus umbra;
Quis mihi blanditiasque tuas, quis tum mihi risus
Cecropiosque sales referet, cultosque leporès?

Who now my pains and perils shall divide
As thou wast wont, for ever at my side,
Both when the rugged frost annoy'd our feet,
And when the herbage all was parch'd with heat?
In whom shall I confide, whose counsel find
A balmy medicine to my troubled mind?
Or whose discourse with innocent delight
Shall fill me now, and cheat the wintry night?
While hiſses on my hearth the pulpy pear,
And blackening chesnuts start and crackle there;
While storms abroad the dreary scene o'erwhelm,
And the wind thunders through the riven elm?
Or who, when summer suns their summit reach,
And Pan sleeps hidden by the sheltering beech,
Who then shall render me thy Attic vein
Of wit, too polish'd to inflict a pain?

With the spirit of a man most able to feel, and most worthy to enjoy the delights of true friendship, he describes the rarity of that inestimable bleſsing, and the anguish we suffer from the untimely loſs of it.

Vix sibi quisque parem de millibus invenit unum;
Aut si sors dederit tandem non aspera votis,

Illum inopina dies, qua non speraveris hora,
Surripit, æternum linquens in sæcula damnum.

Scarce one in thousands meets a kindred mind;
And if the long-sought good at last he find,
When least he fears it, death his treasure steals,
And gives his heart a wound that nothing heals.

There is indeed but one effectual lenitive for wounds of this nature, which Milton happily poſsesſed in the sincerity and fervour of his religion. He closes his lamentation for this favourite friend, as he had closed his Lycidas, with just and soothing reflections on the purity of life, by which the object of his regret was distinguished, and with a sublime conception of that celestial beatitude, which he confidently regarded as the infallible and immediate recompense of departed virtue.

Having paid what was due to friendship in his poetical capacity, he devoted his pen to publick affairs, and entered on that career of controversy, which estranged him so long, and carried him so far from those milder and more engaging studies, that nature and education had made the darlings of his mind. In his first ecclesiastical treatise of Reformation, published in 1641, he makes a very solemn appeal to Heaven on his integrity as a writer. In his subsequent work, on the Reason of Church Government, published also in 1641, he exhibits an extensive view of his literary projects not yet moulded into form, but, like the unarranged elements of creation, now floating at large in his capacious mind.

I transcribe the long paſsage alluded to, because it illustrates the mental character of Milton with a mild energy, a solemn splendour of sentiment and expreſsion peculiar to himself.

" Time serves not now, and perhaps I might seem too profuse to give any certain account of what the mind at home, in the spacious circuits of her musing, hath liberty to propose to herself, though of highest hope and hardest attempting; whether that epic form, whereof the two poems of Homer, and those other two of Virgil and Taſso are a diffuse,

and the book of Job a brief model; or whether the rules of Aristotle herein are strictly to be kept, or nature to be followed, which in them that know art, and use judgment, is no transgreſsion, but an enriching of art. And lastly, what king or knight before the conquest might be chosen, in whom to lay the pattern of a Christian hero. And as Taſso gave to a prince of Italy his choice, whether he would command him to write of Godfrey's expedition against the Infidels, Belisarius against the Goths, or Charlemain against the Lombards; if to the instinct of nature and the imboldening of art aught may be trusted, and that there be nothing adverse in our climate, or the fate of this age, it haply would be no rashneſs, from an equal diligence and inclination, to present the like offer in our ancient stories. Or whether those dramatick constitutions wherein Sophocles and Euripides reign, shall be found more doctrinal and exemplary to a nation.—.... Or if occasion shall lead to imitate those magnifick odes and hymns, wherein Pindarus and Callimachus are in most things worthy; but those frequent songs throughout the law and prophets, beyond all these, not in their divine argument alone, but in the very critical art of composition, may be easily made appear over all the kinds of lyrick poesy to be incomparable. These abilities, wheresoever they be found, are the inspired gift of God, rarely bestowed, but yet to some, (though most abuse) in every nation; and are of power, beside the office of a pulpit, to inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and publick civility, to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune; to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's almightineſs, and what he works, and what he suffers to be wrought, with high providence in his church; to sing victorious agonies of martyrs and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of Christ; to deplore the general relapses of kingdoms and states from justice and God's true worship. Lastly, whatsoever in religion is holy and sublime, in virtue amiable or grave, whatsoever hath paſsion or admiration in all the changes of that which is called fortune from without, or the wily subtleties and refluxes of man's thoughts from within; all these things with a solid and treatable smoothneſs to

paint out and describe. Teaching over the whole book of sanctity and virtue, through all the instances of example, with such delight to those, especially of soft and delicious temper, who will not so much as look upon truth herself, unleſs they see her elegantly dreſsed; that whereas the paths of honesty and good life appear now rugged and difficult, though they be indeed easy and pleasant, they will then appear to all men both easy and pleasant, though they were rugged and difficult indeed.——

" The thing which I had to say, and those intentions which have lived within me ever since I could conceive myself any thing worth to my country, I return to crave excuse, that urgent reason hath plucked from me by an abortive and fore-dated discovery. And the accomplishment of them lies not but in a power above man's to promise; but that none hath by more studious ways endeavoured, and with more unwearied spirit that none shall, that I dare almost aver of myself, as far as life and free leisure will extend. Neither do I think it shame to covenant with any knowing reader, that for some few years yet I may go on trust with him toward the payment of what I am now indebted, as being a work not to be raised from the heat of youth, or the vapours of wine; like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amorist, or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite; nor to be obtained by the invocation of dame Memory and her siren daughters, but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit, who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his Seraphim, with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases: to this must be added industrious and select reading, steady observation, insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs; till which in some measure be compaſsed, at mine own peril and cost, I refuse not to sustain this expectation from as many as are not loath to hazard so much credulity upon the best pledges that I can give them. Although it nothing content me to have disclosed thus much before hand, but that I trust hereby to make it manifest with what small willingneſs I endure to interrupt the pursuit of no leſs hopes than these, and leave a calm and pleasing solitarineſs, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark in a troubled sea of noise and hoarse

disputes, put from beholding the bright countenance of truth, in the quiet and still air of delightful studies."

Mr. Warton, who has cited the last sentence of this very interesting paſsage, as a proof that Milton, then engaged in controversy, sighed for his more congenial pursuits, laments that the vigorous portion of his life, that "those years in which imagination is on the wing, were unworthily and unprofitably wasted on temporary topicks." Many lovers of poetry will sympathize with this amiable writer in his regret; but others may still entertain very different sensations on the subject. Allowing for a moment that the controversial writings of Milton deserve to be neglected and forgotten, reasons may yet be found to rejoice rather than lament, that he exerted his faculties in composing them. The occupation, however it might suspend his poetical enterprizes, cherished the ardour and energy of his mind; and above all, confirmed in him that well-founded and upright self-esteem to which we are principally indebted for his sublimest production. The works I allude to were in his own estimation indispensable and meritorious; had he not written them, as he frankly informs us, "he would have heard within himself, all his life after, of discourage and reproach." Nothing perhaps but this retrospect on a life paſsed, as his own conscience aſsured him, in the faithful discharge of arduous and irksome duties, could have afforded to the declining days of Milton that confident vigour of mind, that intense and inextinguishable fire of imagination, which gave existence and perfection to his Paradise Lost.

He appears to have thought, with a celebrated ancient, that perfect morality is neceſsary to the perfection of genius, and that sublimity in composition may be expected only from the man who has attained the sublime in the steady practice of virtue.

These noble and animating ideas seem to have had great influence on his conduct very early in life, for in speaking of the studies and sentiments of his youth, he says

"I was confirmed in this opinion, that he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter, in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem; that is, a composition and pattern of the honourablest things, not presuming to sing high praises of heroick men, or famous

cities, unleſs he have in himself the experience and the practice of all that which is praise-worthy."

In reply to the absurd charge of his leading a diſsolute life, he gives an engaging and spirited account of his domestick conduct. "Those morning haunts are, where they should be, at home; not sleeping or concocting the surfeits of an irregular feast, but up and stirring; in winter, often ere the sound of any bell awake men to labour, or to devotion; in summer, as oft with the bird that first rouses, or not much tardier, to read good authors, or cause them to be read, till the attention be weary, or memory have its full fraught; then with useful and generous labours, preserving the body's health and hardineſs, to render lightsome, clear, and not lumpish obedience to the mind."

Had the prose works of Milton no merit but that of occasionally exhibiting little sketches of his sentiments, his manners, and occupations, they would on this account be highly valuable to every reader, whom a paſsionate admiration of the poet has induced to wish for all poſsible acquaintance with the man. To gratify such readers, I select from his various works those paſsages that display in the strongest point of view his moral and domestick character: it is my firm belief, that as this is more known, it will become more and more an object of affection and applause; yet I am far from surveying it with that blind idolatry which sees no defect, or with that indiscreet partiality which labours to hide the failing it discovers. A biographer must have ill understood the nature of Milton, who could suppose it poſsible to gratify his spirit by homage so unworthy; for my own part, I am persuaded his attachment to truth was as sincere and fervent as that of the honest Montaigne, who says, "I would come again with all my heart from the other world to give any one the lie, who should report me other than I was, though he did it to honour me."

I shall not, therefore, attempt to deny or to excuse the fatiguing heavineſs or the coarse asperity of his ecclesiastical disputes. The sincerest friends of Milton may here agree with Johnson, who speaks of his controversial merriment as disgusting; but when the critick adds, such is his malignity, that "hell grows darker at his frown," they must abhor this

base misapplication, I had almost said this profanation, of Miltonick verse.

In a controversial treatise that gave rise to such an imputation, we should expect to find the polemick savagely thirsting for the blood of his adversaries; it is just the reverse. Milton's antagonist had indeed suggested to the publick, with infernal malignity, that he was a miscreant, "who ought in the name of Christ to be stoned to death." This antagonist, as Milton supposed, was a son of Bishop Hall, "and scrupled not to write thus outrageously against one who," to use the milder words of our author, "in all his writing spake not that any man's skin should be rased."

"The style of his piece," says Johnson, in speaking of this Apology, "is rough, and such perhaps is that of his antagonist." The different degrees of roughnefs that the two writers displayed give a singular effect to this observation of the critick, who confounds the coarse and intemperate vehemence of the one, with the outrageous barbarity of the other. Milton sometimes wrote with the unguarded and ungraceful asperity of a man in wrath; but let equity add, that when he did so, he was exasperated by foes who exerted against him all the persecuting ferocity of a fiend.

The incidents of his life were calculated to put his temper and his fortitude to the most arduous trials, and in the severest of these, he will be found constant and exemplary in the exercise of gentle and beneficent virtue. From the thorns of controversy he was plunged into the still sharper thorns of connubial difsension: during the Whitsuntide of the year 1643, at the age of thirty-five, he married Mary, the daughter of Richard Powell, a gentleman who resided at Forest-hill, near Shotover, in Oxfordshire. This ill-starred union might arise from an infantine acquaintance, as the grandfather of Milton had probably lived very near the seat of the Powells. What led to the connection we can only conjecture; but we know that it was unhappy, as the lady after living a few weeks with her husband in London, deserted him under the decent pretence of pafsing the summer months on a visit to her father, with whom the indulgent poet gave her permifsion to remain till Michaelmas: during

the interval he was engaged in kind attentions to his father, whom he now established under his own roof. The old man had been settled at Reading with his younger son Christopher, a lawyer and a royalist; but thought it expedient to quit that place on its being taken by Efsex, the parliamentary general, and found a comfortable asylum for the residue of his long life in the filial piety and tender protection of the poet.

At the time appointed, Milton solicited the return of his wife: she did not condescend even to answer his letter; he repeated his request by a meſsenger, "who, to the best of my remembrance," says Philips, "reported that he was dismiſsed with some sort of contempt. This proceeding, in all probability," continues the biographer, whose situation made him the best judge of occurrences so extraordinary, "was grounded upon no other cause but this, namely, that the family being generally addicted to the cavalier party, as they called it, and some of them possibly engaged in the king's service, (who by this time had his head quarters at Oxford, and was in some prospect of succeſs) they began to repent them of having matched the eldest daughter of the family to a person so contrary to them in opinion, and thought it would be a blot in their escutcheon, whenever that court came to flourish again; however, it so incensed our author, that he thought it would be dishonourable ever to receive her again after such a repulse."

Milton had too tender and too elevated a spirit not to feel this affront with double poignancy, as it affected both his happineſs and his dignity: but it was one of his noble characteristicks to find his mental powers rather invigorated than enfeebled by injury and affliction. He thought it the prerogative of wisdom to find remedies against every evil, however unexpected, by which vice or infirmity can embitter life. In reflecting on his immediate domestick trouble, he conceived the generous design of making it subservient to the publick good. He found that in discordant marriage there is misery, for which he thought there existed a very easy remedy, and perfectly consistent both with reason and religion. With these ideas he published in 1644 the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce: this he endeavoured to support by subsequent publications on the same subject, which had deeply occupied both his mind and heart. In these

treatises the energy of his language is very striking; it forcibly proves how keenly he felt the anguish of connubial infelicity, and how ardently he laboured to remove from himself and others "that secret affliction," to use one of his own expreſsive phrases, "of an unconscionable size to human strength."

He argues, indeed, for what the majority of modern legislators and divines have thought inconsistent with sound morality and true religion; but they who deem his arguments inconclusive, may yet admire the powers and the probity of the advocate. His view of the question is as extensive and liberal as his intention was pure and benevolent: if a few words of our Saviour, in their literal sense, are against him, the spirit of the Gospel may be thought by sincere Christians to allow him all the latitude for which he contends; the most rigid opponent of his doctrine may be frequently charmed with his rich vein of fervid eloquence, and Christian philanthropy.

His three publications on Divorce were followed by Colasterion, a reply to a nameleſs answer against his doctrine; this work is an angry invective, in which he endeavours, but not happily, to overwhelm his antagonist with ridicule.

Those who love not Milton, affect to speak scornfully of all his writings on this subject, and intimate that they were received at first with universal contempt; but this was far from being the case, they were applauded by many on whose judgment the author set the highest value, though they were made a source of indecent mirth by the vulgar; and we may reasonably conclude that it was this circumstance which induced him to wish he had written them in Latin. To the low ribaldry with which they were attacked he alludes in the sonnet, celebrated for the following admirable lines on the hypocritical or intemperate aſsertors of liberty,

> That bawl for freedom in their senseleſs mood,
> And still revolt, when truth would set them free;
> License they mean, when they cry liberty,
> For who loves that, must first be wise and good.

This noble sentiment he has inculcated more than once in prose, and

as his life was in harmony with his precept, it might have taught his enemies to avoid the grofs absurdity of representing him as the lover of anarchy and confusion; never was a mind better constituted than Milton's to set a just value on the prime blefsings of peace and order; if he ran into political errours, they arose not from any fondnefs for scenes of turbulence, but rather from his generous credulity respecting the virtue of mankind; from believing that many hypocrites, who affected a wish to establish peace and order in his country, on what he esteemed the surest foundation, were as sincere and disinterested as himself.

"From this time," says Johnson, "it is observed that he became an enemy to the Presbyterians, whom he had favoured before. He that changes his party by his humour, is not much more virtuous than he that changes it by his interest; he loves himself rather than truth." Notwithstanding the air of morality in this remark, it may be questioned if ever an observation was made on any great character more invidious, or more unjust; when the Presbyterians were favoured by Milton, they spoke the language of the oppreſsed; on their being invested with power, they forgot their own pleas for liberty of conscience, and became, in their turn, persecutors; it was the consistency of virtue therefore in Milton, that made him at one time their advocate, and at another their opponent: so far from loving himself better than truth, he was perhaps of all mortals the least selfish; he contended for religion without seeking emoluments from the church; he contended for the state without aiming at any civil or military employment. Truth and justice were the idols of his heart, and the study of his life; if he sometimes failed of attaining them, it was not because he loved any thing better, it was because he overshot the object of his sincere affection, from the fondnefs and ardour of his pursuit.

His wife still persisted in her desertion, but he amused his mind, under the mortification her conduct had occasioned, by frequent visits to the Lady Margaret Ley, whose manners and conversation were peculiarly engaging. Her father, the Earl of Marlborough, had held the highest offices in a former reign, and of his virtues she used to speak with such filial eloquence, as inspired Milton with a sonnet in her praise.

He continued also to manifest his firm affection to the publick good,

by two compositions intended to promote it; the little tractate on Education, addreſsed to Mr. Hartlib, who had requested his thoughts upon that interesting subject, and his "Areopagitica, a Speech for the Liberty of unlicensed Printing."

The latter has been reprinted, with a spirited preface by Thomson, a poet, whom a paſsion for freedom, united to genius, had highly qualified as an editor and eulogist of Milton.

Had the author of the Paradise Lost left us no composition but his Areopagitica, he would be still entitled to the affectionate veneration of every Englishman, who exults in that intellectual light which is the noblest characteristick of his country, and for which England is chiefly indebted to the liberty of the preſs. Our constant advocate for freedom, in every department of life, vindicated this most important privilege with a mind fully sensible of its value. He poured all his heart into this vindication; and to speak of his work in his own energetick language, we may justly call it, what he has defined a good book to be, "the precious life blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life."

His late biographer, instead of praising Milton for a service so honourably rendered to literature, seems rather desirous of annihilating its merit, by directing his sarcastick animosity against the liberty of the preſs. "It seems not more reasonable," says Johnson, "to leave the right of printing unrestrained, because writers may be afterwards censured, than it would be to sleep with doors unbolted, because by our laws we can hang a thief."

This is servile sophistry; the author's illustration of a thief may be turned against himself. To suffer no book to be published without a license, is tyranny as absurd as it would be to suffer no traveller to paſs along the highway without producing a certificate that he is not a robber.

Even bad books may have their use, as Milton observes; and I mention this observation chiefly to shew how liberally he introduces a just compliment to a great author of his own time in support of this idea; "what better witneſs," says the advocate for unlicensed printing, "can ye expect I should produce than one of your own now sitting in parliament, the

chief of learned men reputed in this land, Mr. Selden, whose volume of Natural and National Laws proves, not only by great authorities brought together, but by exquisite reasons and theorems almost mathematically demonstrative, that all opinions, yea errours known, read, and collated, are of main service and afsistance towards the speedy attainment of what is truest." This eulogy alone appears sufficient to refute a remark unfriendly to Milton, that he was frugal of his praise; such frugality will hardly be found united to a benevolent heart and a glowing imagination.

In 1645 his early poems, both English and Latin, were first published in a little volume by Humphry Mosely, who informs the reader in his advertisement, that he had obtained them by solicitation from the author, regarding him as a succefsful rival of Spencer.

Milton had now pafsed more than three years in that singular state of mortification which the disobedience of his wife occasioned. His time had been occupied by the incefsant exercise of his mental powers, but he probably felt with peculiar poignancy

" A craving void left aching in the breast."

As he entertained serious thoughts of enforcing by his own example his doctrine of divorce, and of marrying another wife who might be worthy of the title, he paid his addrefses to the daughter of Doctor Davies: the father seems to have been a convert to Milton's arguments; but the lady had scruples. She pofsefsed, according to Philips, both wit and beauty. A novelist could hardly imagine circumstances more singularly distrefsing to sensibility than the situation of the poet, if, as we may reasonably conjecture, he was deeply enamoured of this lady; if her father was inclined to accept him as a son-in-law, and if the object of his love had no inclination to reject his suit, but what arose from a dread of his being indifsolubly united to another.

Perhaps Milton alludes to what he felt on this occasion in those affecting lines of Paradise Lost, where Adam, prophetically enumerating the miseries to arise from woman, says, in closing the melancholy list, that man sometimes

——His happiest choice too late
Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock bound

To a fell adversary, his hate or shame!
Which infinite calamity shall cause
To human life, and household peace confound.

However strong the scruples of his new favourite might have been, it seems not improbable that he would have triumphed over them, had not an occurrence, which has the air of an incident in romance, given another turn to the emotions of his heart. While he was conversing with a relation, whom he frequently visited in Saint Martin's-lane, the door of an adjoining apartment was suddenly opened; he beheld his repentant wife kneeling at his feet, and imploring his forgiveneſs. After the natural struggles of honest pride and just resentment, he forgave and received her; "partly from the interceſsion of their common friends, and partly," says his nephew, "from his own generous nature, more inclinable to reconciliation than to perseverance in anger and revenge."

Fenton justly remarks, that the strong impreſsion which this interview must have made on Milton "contributed much to the painting of that pathetick scene in Paradise Lost, in which Eve addreſses herself to Adam for pardon and peace." The verses, charming as they are, acquire new charms when we consider them as descriptive of the poet himself and the penitent destroyer of his domestick comfort:

——Her lowly plight
Immovable, till peace obtain'd from fault
Acknowledged, and deplored, in Adam wrought
Commiseration; soon his heart relented
Towards her, his life so late, and sole delight,
Now at his feet submiſsive in distreſs!
Creature so fair his reconcilement seeking,
His counsel, whom she had displeased, his aid.
As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost.

It has been said, that Milton resembled his own Adam in the comelineſs of his person, but he seems to have resembled him still more in

much nobler endowments, and particularly in uniting great tenderneſs of heart to equal dignity of mind. Soon after he had pardoned and lived again with his wife, he afforded an asylum in his own house to both her parents, and to their numerous family. They were active royalists, and fell into great diſtreſs by the ruin of their party: these were the persons who had not only treated Milton with contemptuous pride, but had imbittered his existence for four years, by instigating his wife to persist in deserting him. The mother, as Wood intimates, was his greatest enemy, and occasioned the perverse conduct of her daughter. The father, though sumptuous in his mode of life, when he first received Milton as his son-in-law, had never paid the marriage portion of a thousand pounds according to his agreement, and was now stripped of his property by the prevalence of the party he had opposed. On persons thus contumelious and culpable towards him, Milton bestowed his favour and protection. Can the records of private life exhibit a more magnanimous example of forgiveneſs and beneficence?

At the time of his wife's unexpected return, he was preparing to remove from Aldersgate to a larger house in Barbican, with a view of increasing the number of his scholars. It was in this new mansion that he received the forgiven penitent, and provided a refuge for her relations, whom he retained under his roof, according to Fenton, "till their affairs were accommodated by his interest with the victorious party."

They left him soon after the death of his father, who ended a very long life in the year 1647; and not without the gratification, peculiarly soothing to an affectionate old man, of bestowing his benediction on a grandchild; for within the year of Milton's re-union with his wife, his family was increased by a daughter, Anne, the eldest of his children, born July 29, 1646.

When his apartments were no longer occupied by the guests whom he had so generously received, he admitted more scholars; but their number was small, and Philips imagines that he was induced to withdraw himself from the buſineſs of education by a prospect of being appointed adjutant-general in Sir William Waller's army. Whatever might have been the motive for his change of life, he quitted his large house in

Barbican for a smaller in Holbourn, " among those," says his nephew, " that open backwards into Lincoln's-inn Fields;" where he lived, according to the same author, in great privacy, and perpetually engaged in a variety of studies.

Three years elapsed without any new publication from his pen; a silence which the various affecting occurrences in his family would naturally produce. In 1649, he published the Tenure of Kings and Magistrates; and in his summary account of his own writings, he relates the time and occasion of this performance. His Observations on the Articles of Peace between the Earl of Ormond and the Irish Rebels appeared in the same year; a composition that he probably thought too inconsiderable to be enumerated in his own account of what he had published.

He now began to employ himself in one of the great works, with which he hoped to enrich his native language; the sketch that he has drawn of himself and his studies at this period, is so interesting and honourable, that it would be injurious not to translate the Latin expressions to which I allude.

" Thus," says Milton, " as a private citizen I gratuitously gave my aſsistance to the church and state; on me, in return, they bestowed only the common benefit of protection; but my conduct aſsuredly gave me a good conscience, a good reputation among good men, and this honourable freedom of discourse: others have been busy in drawing to themselves unmerited emoluments and honour. No one has ever beheld me soliciting any thing, either in person or by my friends; I have confined myself much at home; and by my own property, though much of it has been withheld from me in this civil tumult, I have supported life, however sparingly, and paid a tax imposed upon me not in the most equitable proportion.

" Having now a prospect of abundant leisure, I directed my studies to the history of my country, which I began from its remotest source, and intended to bring down, if poſsible, in a regular proceſs to the present times. I had executed four books, when, on the settlement of the republick, the council of state, then first established by the authority of

parliament, called me, most unexpectedly, to its service, and wished to employ me chiefly in its foreign concerns." It has not yet, I believe, been ascertained to whom Milton was particularly indebted for his publick appointment. "He was," says Wood, "without any seeking of his, by the endeavours of a private acquaintance who was a member of the new council of state, chosen Latin secretary." The new council consisted of thirty-nine members, including two persons, whom we may suppose equally inclined to promote the interest of Milton; these were Serjeant Bradshaw and Sir Harry Vane the younger: it seems probable that he owed his station of secretary to the former, since in his second defence he mentions him as a friend entitled to his particular regard.

Soon after his publick appointment, he was requested by the council to counteract the effect of the celebrated book entitled Icon Basilike, the royal image, and in 1649 he published his Iconoclastes, the image breaker.

The sagacity of Milton enabled him to discover, that the pious work imputed to the deceased king was a political artifice to serve the cause of the royalists; but as it was impoſsible for him to obtain such evidence to detect the imposition as time has since produced, he executed a regular reply to the book as a real production of the king, intimating at the same time his suspicion of the fraud.

This reply has recently drawn on the name of Milton much liberal praise, and much injurious obloquy. A Scottish critick of great eminence, Lord Monboddo, has celebrated the opening of the Iconoclastes as a model of English prosè, or to use his own just expreſsions, "a specimen of noble and manly eloquence." Johnson, from the same work, takes occasion to insinuate that Milton was a dishonest man. A charge so serious, and from a moralist who profeſsed such an attachment to truth, deserves some discuſsion. "As faction," says the unfriendly biographer, "seldom leaves a man honest, however it might find him, Milton is suspected of having interpolated the book called Icon Basilike, by inserting a prayer taken from Sidney's Arcadia, and imputing it to the king, whom he charges in his Iconoclastes with the use of this prayer as with a heavy crime, in the indecent language with which prosperity

had emboldened the advocates for rebellion to insult all that is venerable or great."

A simple question will shew the want of candour in this attempt to impeach the moral credit of Milton. By whom is he suspected of this dishonesty? his severe biographer sinks the name of his own old and dishonourable afsociate in depreciating Milton, and does not inform us that it was the infamous Lauder, who having failed to blast the reputation of the poet, with equal impotence and fury pursued his attack against the probity of the man, in an execrable pamphlet entitled "King Charles the First vindicated from the Charge of Plagiarism brought against him by Milton, and Milton himself convicted of Forgery." Instead of naming Lauder, who persisted in trying to substantiate this most improbable charge, Johnson would insidiously lead us to believe that the respectable Doctor Birch supported it, though Birch, who had indeed printed, in the Appendix to his Life of Milton, the idle story which Lauder urges as a proof of Milton's imposture, had properly rejected that story from the improved edition of his work; and honourably united with another candid biographer of the poet, the learned Bishop of Bristol, in declaring that "such contemptible evidence is not to be admitted against a man, who had a soul above being guilty of so mean an action."

There are some calumnies so utterly despicable and absurd, that to refute them elaborately is almost a disgrace; did not the calumny I am now speaking of belong to this description, it might be here observed, that a writer who published remarks on Johnson's Life of Milton, in which the asperity of that biographer is opposed with superiour asperity, has proved with new arguments the futility of the charge in question. Instead of repeating these, let me observe, that the attempt of Johnson to revive and give countenance to a base and sufficiently refuted imputation against the great author whose life he was writing, is one of the most extraordinary proofs, that literature can exhibit, how far the virulence of political hatred may pervert a very powerful mind, even a mind which makes moral truth its principal pursuit, and afsiduously labours to be just. This remark is not made in enmity to

Johnson, but to shew how cautious the most cultivated understanding should be in watching the influence of any hostile prejudice. Milton himself may be also urged as an example to enforce the same caution; for though he was certainly no impostor in imputing the prayer in question to the king, yet his considering the king's use of it as an offence against Heaven, is a pitiable absurdity; an absurdity as glaring as it would be to affirm, that the divine poet is himself profane in aſsigning to a speech of the Almighty in his poem the two following verses,

> Son of my bosom, Son, who art alone
> My word, my wisdom, and effectual might.

Because they are partly borrowed from a line in Virgil, addreſsed by a heathen goddeſs to her child:

> " Nate meæ vires, mea magna potentia solus."

The heat of political animosity could thus throw a mist over the bright intellects of Milton; yet his Iconoclastes, taken altogether, is a noble effort of manly reason.

Having thus signalized himself as the literary antagonist of Charles, when the celebrated Salmasius was hired to arraign the proceedings of England against him, every member of the English council turned his eyes upon Milton, as the man from whose spirit and eloquence his country might expect the most able vindication. In 1651, he published his Defence of the People, the most elaborate of all his Latin compositions; the merits and defects of this signal performance I may probably discuſs in an eſsay on the prose works of Milton; here I shall only remark, that in the composition of it he gave the most singular proof of genuine publick spirit that ever patriot had occasion to display; since, at the time of his engaging on the work, the infirmity in his eyes was so alarming, that his physicians aſsured him he must inevitably lose them if he perſisted in his labour. " On this occasion," says Milton to a savage antagonist who had reproached him with blindneſs, " I reflected that many

had purchased with a superiour evil a lighter good; glory with death; to me, on the contrary, greater good was proposed with an inferiour evil; so that by incurring blindneſs alone, I might fulfil the most honourable of all duties, which, as it is a more solid advantage than glory itself, ought to be more eligible in the estimation of every man; I resolved therefore to make what short use I might yet have of my eyes as conducive as poſsible to publick utility; you see what I preferred, and what I lost, with the principle on which I acted; let slanderers therefore cease to talk irreverently on the judgments of God, and to make me the subject of their fictions; let them know that I am far from considering my lot with sorrow or repentance, that I persist immovable in my sentiments, that I neither fancy nor feel the anger of God, but on the contrary, experience and acknowledge his paternal clemency and kindneſs in my most important concerns; in this especially, that by the comfort and confirmation which he himself infuses into my spirit, I acquiesce in his divine pleasure, continually considering rather what he has bestowed upon me, than what he has denied. Finally, that I would not exchange the consciousneſs of my own conduct for their merit, whatever it may be; or part with a remembrance which is to my own mind a perpetual source of tranquillity and satisfaction."

Whenever he is induced to mention himself, the purity and vigour of Milton's mind appear in full lustre, whether he speaks in verse or in prose. The preceding paſsage, translated from his second Defence, is consonant to the sonnet on his blindneſs, addreſsed to Cyriac Skinner, which, though different criticks have denied the author to excel in this minute species of composition, has hardly been surpaſsed; it deserves double praise for energy of expreſsion and heroism of sentiment.

The ambition of Milton was as pure as his genius was sublime; his first object on every occasion was to merit the approbation of his conscience and his God; when this most important point was secured, he seems to have indulged the predominant paſsion of great minds, and to have exulted with a triumph proportioned to his toil in the celebrity he acquired: he must have been insensible indeed to publick applause, had he not felt elated by the signal honours which were paid to his name in

various countries, as the eloquent defender of the English nation: "This I can truly affirm," says Milton, in mentioning the reception of his great political performance, "that as soon as my Defence of the People was published and read with avidity, there was not in our metropolis any ambaſsadour from any state or sovereign who did not either congratulate me, if we met by chance, or expreſs a desire to receive me at his house, or visit me at mine."

Toland relates that he received from the parliament a present of a thousand pounds for the Defence. The author does not include this circumstance among the many particulars he mentions of himself; but in speaking of his blindneſs he says, "that far from being neglected on this account by the highest characters in the republic, they constantly regarded him with indulgence and favour, not seeking to deprive him either of distinction or emolument, though his powers of being useful were diminished." Hence he compares himself to an ancient Athenian, supported by a decree of honour at the expence of the publick. Among the foreign compliments he received, the applause of Christina afforded him the highest gratification, for he regarded it as an honourable proof of what he had ever affirmed, that he was "a friend to good sovereigns, though an enemy to tyrants;" and he understood that the Queen of Sweden had made this distinction in commending his book. No author ever acquired a more rapid and extensive celebrity than Milton acquired by this contest. It procured him another foreign friend, by whose lively regard he seems to have been very agreeably surprised. On the publication of his Defence, Leonard Philaras, a native of Athens, who had distinguished himself in Italy, and risen to the rank of envoy from the Duke of Parma to the court of France, conceived a flattering desire to cultivate the friendship of Milton; with this view he sent him his portrait, with very engaging letters, and the highest commendation of the recent Defence. The reply of Milton is remarkable for its elegance and spirit; after thanking his correspondent for presents so agreeable, he says, "If Alexander, in the midst of his martial toil, confeſsed that he laboured but to gain an eulogy from Athens, I may think myself fortunate indeed, and esteem it as the highest honour to be thus commended by the man, in whom alone

the genius and virtue of the ancient Athenians seem, after so long an interval, to revive and flourish. As your city has produced many most eloquent men, I am perfectly willing to confeſs, that whatever proficiency I have made in literature is chiefly owing to my long and inceſsant study of their works. Had I acquired from them such powers of language as might enable me to stimulate our fleets and armies to deliver Greece, the native seat of eloquence, from the tyranny of the Turks, (a splendid enterprise, for which you almost seem to implore our aſsistance) I would aſsuredly do, what would then be among the first objects of my desire; for what did the bravest or most eloquent men of antiquity consider as more glorious or more worthy of themselves, than by persuasive language or bold exploits, to render the Greeks free, and their own legislators." He closes his letter by observing very justly, that it is first necessary to kindle in the minds of the modern Greeks the spirit and virtue of their ancestors; politely adding, "that if this could be accomplished by any man, it might be most reasonably expected from the patriotick enthusiasm and the experience civil and military of his accomplished correspondent." This letter is dated in June, 1652. Milton had soon afterwards the gratification of a visit from this liberal Athenian, who took so tender an interest in the blindneſs of his friend, that on his return to Paris he wrote to him on the subject. The following answer of Milton relates the particulars of his disorder, and shews at the same time with what cheerful magnanimity he supported it.

"To Leonard Philaras.

"As I have cherished from my childhood, if ever mortal did, a reverential fondneſs for the Grecian name, and for your native Athens in particular, so have I continually persuaded myself that at some period I should receive from that city a very signal return for my benevolent regard: nor has the ancient genius of your most noble country failed to realize my presage; he has given me in you an Attic brother, and one most tenderly attached to me, though I was known to you only by my writings, and though your residence was far distant from mine; you first addreſsed me in the most engaging terms by letter, and afterwards coming

unexpectedly to London, and visiting the stranger who had no eyes to see you, continued your kindneſs to me under that calamity which can render me a more eligible friend to no one, and to many perhaps may make me an object of disregard.

" Since therefore you request me not to reject all hope of recovering my sight, as you have an intimate friend at Paris, in Thevenot the physician, who excels particularly in relieving ocular complaints, and whom you wish to consult concerning my eyes, after receiving from me such an account as may enable him to understand the source and symptoms of my disorder; I will certainly follow your kind suggestion, that I may not appear to reject aſsistance, thus offered me perhaps providentially.

" It is about ten years, I think, since I perceived my sight to grow weak and dim, finding at the same time my intestines afflicted with flatulence and oppreſsion.

" Even in the morning, if I began as usual to read, my eyes immediately suffered pain, and seemed to shrink from reading, but after some moderate bodily exercise were refreshed; whenever I looked at a candle I saw a sort of iris around it. Not long afterwards, on the left side of my left eye (which began to fail some years before the other) a darkneſs arose that hid from me all things on that side; if I chanced to close my right eye, whatever was before me seemed diminished. In the last three years, as my remaining eye failed by degrees some months before my sight was utterly gone, all things that I could discern, though I moved not myself, appeared to fluctuate, now to the right, now to the left. Obstinate vapours seem to have settled all over my forehead, and my temples, overwhelming my eyes with a sort of sleepy heavineſs, especially after food, till the evening; so that I frequently recollect the condition of the prophet Phineus in the Argonauticks:

—— " Him vapours dark
Enveloped, and the earth appeared to roll
Beneath him, sinking in a lifeleſs trance."

" But I should not omit to say, that while I had some little sight remaining, as soon as I went to bed and reclined on either side, a

copious light used to dart from my closed eyes; then as my sight grew daily lefs, darker colours seemed to burst forth with vehemence, and a kind of internal noise: but now, as if every thing lucid were extinguished, blackneſs, either absolute or checkered, and inwoven as it were with ash-colour, is accustomed to pour itself on my eyes; yet the darkneſs perpetually before them, as well during the night as in the day, seems always approaching rather to white than to black, admitting, as the eye rolls, a minute portion of light, as through a crevice.

"Though from your physician such a portion of hope also may arise, yet as under an evil that admits no cure, I regulate and tranquillize my mind, often reflecting that since the days of darkneſs allotted to each, as the wise man reminds us, are many, hitherto my darkneſs, by the singular mercy of God, with the aid of study, leisure, and the kind conversation of my friends, is much lefs oppreſsive than the deadly darkneſs to which he alludes. For if, as it is written, man lives not by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, why should not a man acquiesce even in this? not thinking that he can derive light from his eyes alone, but esteeming himself sufficiently enlightened by the conduct or providence of God.

"As long therefore as he looks forward and provides for me as he does, and leads me backward and forward by the hand as it were through my whole life, shall I not cheerfully bid my eyes keep holiday, since such appears to be his pleasure? But whatever may be the event of your kindneſs, my dear Philaras, with a mind not lefs resolute and firm than if I were Lynceus himself, I bid you farewell."

"Westminster, Sept. 28, 1654."

We have no reason to imagine that Milton received any kind of medical benefit from the friendly intention of this amiable foreigner. Strange as the idea may at first appear, perhaps it was better for him as a man and as a poet to remain without a cure; for his devout tenderneſs and energy of mind had so far converted his calamity into a bleſsing, that it seems to have rather promoted than obstructed both the happineſs of his life, and the perfection of his genius. We see, in the admirable

sonnet on his blindneſs, how his reflections on the conscientious labour by which he lost his eyes gave a dignified satisfaction to his spirit. In one of his prose works he expreſses a sentiment on the same subject, that shows in the most striking point of view the meekneſs and sublimity of his devotion. He exults in his misfortune, and feels it endeared to him by the persuasion that to be blind is to be placed more immediately under the conduct and providence of God: when regarded in this manner, it could not fail to quicken and invigorate his mental powers. Blindneſs indeed, without the aid of religious enthusiasm, has a natural tendency to favour that undisturbed, intense, and continual meditation, which works of magnitude require. Perhaps we sometimes include in the catalogue of disadvantages the very circumstances that have been partly instrumental in leading extraordinary men to distinction. In examining the lives of illustrious scholars, we may discover that many of them arose to glory by the impulse of personal misfortune; Bacon and Pope were deformed, Homer and Milton were blind.

It has been frequently remarked that the blind are generally cheerful; it is not therefore marvellous that Milton was very far from being dispirited by the utter extinction of his sight; but his unconquerable vigour of mind was signally displayed in continuing to labour under all the pains and inconveniences of approaching blindneſs, a state peculiarly unfavourable to mental exertion. His left eye became absolutely blind in 1651, the year in which the most considerable of his Latin works was published; and he lost the use of the other in 1654, the year in which he wrote concerning his blindneſs to his Athenian friend. In this interval he repeatedly changed his abode. As every spot inhabited by such a man acquires a sort of consecration in the fancy of his admirers, I shall here transcribe from his nephew the particulars of his residence.

"First he lodged at one Thompson's, next door to the Bull-head tavern, at Charing-croſs, opening into the Spring-garden, which seems to have been only a lodging taken till his designed apartment in Scotland-yard was prepared for him; for hither he soon removed from the foresaid place, and here his third child, a son, was born, which, through the ill usage or bad constitution of an ill-chosen nurse, died an infant: from

this apartment, whether he thought it not healthy, or otherwise convenient for his use, or whatever else was the reason, he soon after took a pretty garden house in Petty France in Westminster, next door to the Lord Scudamore's, and opening into Saint James's park; here he remained no lefs than eight years, namely, from the year 1652 till within a few weeks of King Charles the Second's restoration."

In 1654 Milton, utterly blind, appeared again in the field of controversy, first in his second Defence of the English People, and the following year in a Defence of himself, "Autoris pro se Defensio." The first of these productions is in truth his own vindication; it is the work in which he speaks most abundantly of his own character and conduct; it displays that true eloquence of the heart, by which probity and talents are enabled to defeat the malevolence of an insolent accuser; it proves that the matchlefs mind of this wonderful man united to the poetick imagination of Homer the argumentative energy of Demosthenes. It must however be allowed, that while Milton defended himself with the spirit of the Grecian orator, in imitating the eloquent Athenian he promiscuously caught both his merits and his defects. It is to be regretted that these mighty masters of rhetorick permitted so large an alloy of personal virulence to debase the dignity of national argument: yet as the great orators of every age are apt, we see, to be hurried into the same failing, we may conclude that it is almost inseparable from the weaknefs of nature, and we must not expect to find, though we certainly should endeavour to introduce, the charity of the Gospel in political contention.

But it is not the aim of the present publication to examine either the eloquence or the errours that may be found in the political writings of Milton. I reserve for a future occasion a display of his publick character, and a reply to many remarks of unchristian asperity, with which various enemies of this illustrious man, instead of fairly stating his mistakes, have calumniated his motives, and endeavoured to vilify his name in a political point of view.

There is however one charge alleged against him by Doctor Johnson, which though it chiefly relates to his political composition, yet affects

so eſsentially the moral dignity of the poet and the man, that it seems to require immediate vindication.

I shall wave for the present what his biographer has injuriously said of his remaining in office under Cromwell; but I must not leave unanswered that ignominious charge against an elevated mind, the charge of lavishing the most servile adulation on the usurper. In replying to this plausible accusation, let me be indulged in a few remarks, that may vindicate the credit not only of a single poet, but of all Parnaſsus. The poetical fraternity have been often accused of being ever ready to flatter; but the general charge is, in some measure, inconsistent with a knowledge of human nature; as poets, generally speaking, have more sensibility and leſs prudence than other men, we should naturally expect to find them rather distinguished by an abundance, than by a want of sincerity; when they are candidly judged they will generally be found so. A poet indeed is as apt to applaud an hero, as a lover is to praise his mistreſs; and both, according to the forcible and true expreſsion of Shakspeare,

"Are of imagination all compact."

Their descriptions are more faithful to the acuteneſs of their own feelings than to the real qualities of the objects described. Paradoxical as it may sound, they are often deficient in truth, in proportion to the exceſs of their sincerity; the charm or the merit they celebrate, is partly the phantom of their own fancy; but they believe it real, while they praise it as a reality; and as long as their belief is sincere, it is unjust to accuse them of adulation. Milton himself gives an excellent touchstone for the trial of praise in the following paſsage of his Areopagitica; "there are three principal things, without which all praising is but courtship and flattery; first, when that only is praised which is solidly worth praise; next, when greatest likelihoods are brought that such things are truly and really in those persons to whom they are ascribed; the other, when he who praises, by shewing that such his actual persuasion is, of whom he writes, can demonstrate that he flatters not." If we try Milton by this his own equitable law, we must honourably acquit him of the illiberal

charge, that might almost be thought sufficiently refuted by its apparent inconsistency with his elevated spirit.

Though in the temperate judgment of posterity Cromwell appears only "a bold bad man," yet he dazzled and deceived his contemporaries with such a strong and continued blaze of real and visionary splendour, that almost all the power and all the talents on earth seemed eager to pay him unsolicited homage. But I mean not to rest the vindication of Milton on the prevalence of example, which however high and dignified it might be, could never serve as a sanction for the man, to whom the rare union of spotlefs integrity with consummate genius had given an elevation of character, that no rank and no powers, unsupported by probity, could pofsibly bestow: though all the potentates and all the literati of the world conspired to flatter the usurper, we might expect Milton to remain, like his own faithful Abdiel,

> Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified.

Afsuredly he was so; and in praising Cromwell, he praised a personage whose matchlefs hypocrisy afsumed before him a mask that the arch apostate of the poet could not wear in the presence of Abdiel, the mask of affectionate zeal towards man, and of devout attachment to God; a mask that Davenant in the following couplet describes with poetical felicity:

> Difsembled zeal, ambition's old disguise,
> The vizard in which fools outface the wise.

It was more as a saint than as a hero that Cromwell deluded the generous credulity of Milton; and perhaps the recollection of his having been thus deluded, inspired the poet with his admirable apology for Uriel deceived by Satan:

> For neither man nor angel can discern
> Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
> Invisible, except to God alone,
> By his permifsive will, through heaven and earth;

> And oft, though Wisdom wake, Suspicion sleeps
> At Wisdom's gate, and to Simplicity
> Resigns her charge; while Goodneſs thinks no ill
> Where no ill seems.

That sublime religious enthusiasm, which was the predominant characteristick of the poet, exposed him particularly to be duped by the prime artifice of the political impostor, who was indeed so consummate in the art of deception, that he occasionally deceived the prudent unheated Ludlow, and the penetrating inflexible Bradshaw. Nay, who carried his habitual deception to such a length, that he is supposed by some acute judges of human nature to have been ultimately the dupe of his own hypocritical fervour, and to have thought himself, what he induced many to think him, the selected servant of God, expreſsly chosen to accomplish wonders, not only for the good of this nation, but for the true interest of Christendom. Though Cromwell had aſsumed the title of Protector when Milton in his second Defence sketched a masterly portrait of him, yet the new potentate had not at this period completely unveiled his domineering and oppreſsive character; on the contrary, he affected with the greatest art such a tender concern for the people, he represented himself, both in his publick and private protestations, so perfectly free from all ambitious desires, that many persons, who poſseſsed not the noble unsuspecting simplicity of Milton, believed the protector sincere in declaring, that he reluctantly submitted to the cares of government, merely for the settlement and security of the nation. With a mind full of fervid admiration for his marvellous achievements, and generously disposed to give him credit for every upright intention, Milton hailed him as the father of his country, and delineated his character: if there were some particles of flattery in this panegyrick, which if we adhere to our author's just definition of flattery, we cannot allow, it was completely purified from every cloud or speck of servility, by the most splendid and sublime admonition that was ever given to a man poſseſsed of great talents and great power by a genuine and dauntleſs friend, to whom talents and power were only objects of reverence, when under

the real or fancied direction of piety and virtue. As enthusiasm was the characteristick of Milton, it is most probable that his warm imagination beheld in Cromwell a person destined by Heaven to reduce, if not to annihilate, what he considered as the most enormous grievance of earth, the prevalence of Popery and persecution. The several humane and spirited letters which he wrote, in the name of Oliver, to redreſs the injuries of the persecuted Protestants who suffered in Piedmont, were highly calculated to promote, in equal degrees, his zeal for the purity of religion, and his attachment to the protector: yet great as the powers of Cromwell were to dazzle or delude, and willing as the liberal mind of Milton was to give credit to others for that sincere devotion and pure publick spirit which he poſseſsed himself, there is great reason to apprehend that his veneration and esteem for the protector were entirely destroyed by the treacherous despotism of his latter days. From one of Milton's familiar letters, written in the year preceding the death of Cromwell, it is evident that he had no secret intimacy or influence with the protector; and that instead of engaging in ambitious machinations, he confined himself as much as poſsible to the privacy of domestick life. Finally, on a full and fair review of all the intercourse between Milton and Cromwell, there is not the smallest ground to suspect that Milton ever spoke or acted as a sycophant or a slave. He bestowed indeed a magnificent eulogy both in prose and rhyme on the protector, but at a period when it was the general opinion that the utmost efforts of panegyrick could hardly equal the magnitude and the variety of the services rendered to his country by the acknowledged hero and the fancied patriot; at a period when the eulogist, who understood the frailty of nature, and foresaw the temptations of recent power, might hope that praise so magnificent, united to the noblest advice, would prove to the ardent spirit of the protector the best preservative against the delirium of tyranny. These generous hopes were disappointed; the despotick proceedings of Cromwell convinced his independent monitor that he deserved not the continued applause of a free spirit; and though the achievements of the protector were so fascinating that poetical panegyricks encircled even his grave, yet Milton praised him no more; but after his decease, fondly hailed the revival of parliamentary

independance as a new dawning of God's providence on the nation. In contemplating these two extraordinary men together, the real lover of truth and freedom can hardly fail to observe the striking contrast of their characters; one was an absolute model of false, and the other of true, grandeur. Mental dignity and publick virtue were in Cromwell fictitious and delusive; in Milton they were genuine and unchangeable. Cromwell shews the formidable wonders that courage and cunning can perform, with the afsistance of fortune; Milton the wonders of a superiour kind, that integrity and genius can accomplish in despite of adversity and affliction.

An eager solicitude to vindicate a most noble mind from a disgraceful imputation has led me to anticipate some publick events. From these observations on the native and incorruptible independance of Milton's mind, let us return to the incidents of his domestick life.

Soon after his removal to his house in Westminster, his fourth child, Deborah, was born, on the 2d of May, 1652. The mother, according to Philips, died in child-bed. The situation of Milton at this period was such as might have depreſsed the mind of any ordinary man: at the age of forty-four he was left a widower, with three female orphans, the eldest about six years old, deformed in her person, and with an impediment in her speech; his own health was very delicate, and with eyes that were rapidly sinking into incurable blindneſs, he was deeply engaged in a literary contest of the highest importance with political and personal enemies. When these in 1654 were all silenced and subdued by the irresistible power of his superiour talents and probity, " he had leisure again," says his nephew, " for his own studies and private designs."

It seems to have been the habit of Milton to devote as many hours in every day to intense study as the mental faculties could bear, and to render such constant exertion leſs oppreſsive to the mind by giving variety to the objects of his application, engaging in different works of magnitude at the same time, that he might occasionally relieve and inspirit his thoughts by a transition from one species of composition to another. If we may rely on the information of Philips, he now began to employ himself in this manner on three great works; a voluminous Latin

dictionary, an history of England, and an epic poem; of the two last I shall speak again, according to the order of their publication. The first, and least important, a work to which blindnefs was peculiarly unfavourable, was never brought to maturity; yet served to amuse this most diligent of authors, by a change of literary occupation, almost to the close of his life. His collection of words amounted to three folios; but the papers, after his decease, were so discomposed and deficient, to use the expreſsion of his nephew, "that the work could not be made fit for the preſs;" they proved serviceable however to future compilers, and were used by those who published a Latin dictionary at Cambridge in 1693.

Though he had no eyes to choose a second wife, Milton did not long continue a widower. He married Catherine, the daughter of Captain Woodcock, "a rigid sectarist," says Mr. Warton, "of Hackney." This lady appears to have been the most tender and amiable of the poet's three wives; and she is the only one of the three whom the muse of Milton has immortalized with an affectionate memorial. Within the year of their marriage she gave birth to a daughter, and very soon followed her infant to the grave. "Her husband," says Johnson, "has honoured her memory with a poor sonnet;" an expreſsion of contempt, which only proves that the rough critick was unable to sympathize with the tenderneſs that reigns in the pathetick poetry of Milton: in the opening of this sonnet,

Methought I saw my late espoused saint,
Brought to me, like Alcestis, from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescued from death by force, though pale and faint:

And in the latter part of it,

Her face was veil'd, yet to my fancied sight
Love, sweetneſs, goodneſs, in her person shined
So clear, as in no face with more delight.
But O, as to embrace me she inclined,
I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night.

Milton has equalled the mournful graces of Petrarch and of Camoens, who have each of them left a plaintive composition on a similar idea. The curious reader, who may wish to compare the three poets on this occasion, will find the similarity I speak of in the seventy-ninth sonnet of Petrarch, and the seventy-second of Camoens.

The loſs of a wife so beloved, and the severe inthralment of his country under the increasing despotism of Cromwell, must have wounded very deeply the tender and patriotick feelings of Milton; his variety of affliction from these sources might probably occasion his being silent as an author for some years.

In 1655, he is supposed to have written a national manifesto in Latin, to justify the war against Spain. From that time, when his Defence of himself also appeared, we know not of his having been engaged in any publication till the year 1659, excepting a political manuscript of Sir Walter Raleigh, called the Cabinet Council, which he printed in 1658, with a brief advertisement.

What his sentiments were concerning the last years of Cromwell, and the following distracted period, we have a striking proof in one of his private letters, written not long after the death of the protector. In reply to his foreign friend Oldenburgh, he says, "I am very far from preparing a history of our commotions, as you seem to advise, for they are more worthy of silence than of panegyrick; nor do we want a person with ability to frame a history of our troubles, but to give those troubles a happy termination; for I sympathize with you in the fear that the enemies of our liberty and our religion, who are recently combined, may find us too much exposed to their attack in these our civil diſsensions, or rather our fits of frenzy; they cannot however wound our religion more than we have done ourselves by our own enormities."

The interest of religion appears on every occasion to have maintained its due ascendancy in the mind of Milton, and to have formed, through the whole course of his life, the primary object of his pursuit; it led him to publish in 1659 two distinct treatises, the first "on Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes," the second "on the likeliest Means to remove Hirelings out of the Church;" performances which Johnson presumes to

characterize by an expreſsion not very consonant to the spirit of Christianity, representing them as written merely to gratify the author's malevolence to the clergy; a coarse reproach, which every bigot bestows upon enlightened solicitude for the purity of religion, and particularly uncandid in the present case, because the devout author has conscientiously explained his own motives in the following words:

" I write this, not otherwise appointed or induced than by an inward persuasion of the Christian duty, which I may usefully discharge herein to the common lord and master of us all, and the certain hope of his approbation first and chiefest to be sought."

Milton was not a being of that common and reptile claſs, who aſsume an affected devotion as the mask of malignity. In addreſsing the second of these treatises to the parliament, he describes himself as a man, who " under the protection of the legislative aſsembly had used during eighteen years, on all occasions, to aſsert the just rights and freedoms of church and state."

Had he been conscious of any base servility to Cromwell, he would certainly have abstained from this manly aſsertion of his own patriotick integrity, which in that case could have been only ridiculous and contemptible. His opinions might be erroneous, and his ardent mind overheated; but no man ever maintained with more steadineſs and resolution the native dignity of an elevated spirit; no man more sedulously endeavoured to discharge his duty both to earth and Heaven.

In February, 1659, he published " the ready and easy Way to establish a free Commonwealth;" a work not approved even by republican writers. I will only make one observation upon it; the motto to this performance seems to display the just opinion that Milton entertained concerning the tyranny of Cromwell:

——— Et nos
Consilium Syllæ dedimus, demus populo nunc.

—— Even we have given
Counsel to Sylla; to the people now.

A very happy allusion to the noble but neglected advice that he bestowed on the protector.

Amidst the various political distractions towards the end of the year 1659, he addreſsed a letter to a nameleſs friend, who had conversed with him the preceding evening, "on the dangerous Ruptures of the Commonwealth." This letter, and a brief Sketch of the Commonwealth, addreſsed to General Monk, were soon after the author's death communicated by his nephew to Toland, who imparted them to the publick. Milton gave yet another proof of his unwearied attention to publick affairs, by publishing brief Notes on a Sermon preached by Doctor Griffith at Mercer's chapel, March 25, 1660, "wherein," says the annotator, "many notorious wrestings of Scripture and other falsities are observed."

When the repeated protestations of Monk to support the republick ended in his introduction of the king, the anxious friends of Milton, who thought the literary champion of the parliament might be exposed to revenge from the triumphant royalists, hurried him into concealment.

The solicitude of those who watched over his safety was so great, that it is said they deceived his enemies by a report of his death, and effectually prevented a search for his person (during the first tumultuary and vindictive rage of the royalists) by a pretended funeral. A few weeks before the Restoration, probably in April, he quitted his house in Westminster, and did not appear in publick again till after the act of oblivion, which paſsed on the 29th of August. In this important interval, some events occurred which greatly affected both his security and reputation. The house of commons on the 16th of June manifested their resentment against his person, as well as his writings, by ordering the attorney general to commence a prosecution against him, and by petitioning the king that his two books, the Defence of the People and the Answer to Icon Basilike, might be publickly burnt. Happily for the honour of England the person of the great author was more fortunate than his writings, in escaping from the fury of persecution; within three days after the burning of his books, he found himself relieved from the neceſsity of concealment, and sheltered under the common protection of the law, by the general act of indemnity, which had not included his name in the list of

exceptions. It has been thought wonderful by many, that a writer whose celebrated compositions had rendered him an object of abhorrence to the royal party, could elude the activity of their triumphant revenge; and various conjectures have been started to account for the safety of Milton, after his enemies had too plainly discovered an inclination to crush him. One of these conjectural causes of his escape represents two contemporary poets in so amiable a light, that though I am unable to confirm the anecdote entirely by any new evidence, I shall yet dwell upon it with pleasure. Richardson, whose affectionate veneration for the genius and virtue he celebrates, makes ample amends for all the quaintnefs of his style, has the following pafsage on the subject in question:

" Perplexed and inquisitive as I was, I at length found the secret, which he from whom I had it, thought he had communicated to me long ago, and wondered he had not. I will no longer keep you in expectation: 'twas Sir William Davenant obtained his remifsion, in return for his own life, procured by Milton's interest, when himself was under condemnation anno 1650. A life was owing to Milton, (Davenant's) and 'twas paid nobly; Milton's for Davenant's, at Davenant's intercession. It will now be expected I should declare what authority I have for this story; my first answer is, Mr. Pope told it me; whence had he it? from Mr. Betterton: Sir William was his patron. Betterton was 'prentice to a bookseller, John Holden, the same who printed Davenant's Gondibert. There Sir William saw him, and, persuading his master to part with him, brought him first on the stage. Betterton then may be well allowed to know this transaction from the fountain head."

On this interesting anecdote Johnson makes the following remark: " Here is a reciprocation of generosity and gratitude so pleasing, that the tale makes its own way to credit, but if help were wanted, I know not where to find it; the danger of Davenant is certain from his own relation, but of his escape there is no account."

This pafsage of the critical biographer affords a singular proof that he is sometimes as inaccurate in narration as he is defective in sentiment. Impreſsed as I am with the clearest conviction of his repeated endeavours to depreciate the character of Milton, I will not suppose that Johnson

could designedly suppreſs an evidence of the poet's generosity, which, while he is speaking of it in terms of admiration, he still endeavours to render problematical; yet certain it is, that of Milton's protection of Davenant, a very obvious evidence exists in Antony Wood, who says, under the article Davenant, " He was carried prisoner to the Isle of Wight anno 1650, and afterwards to the Tower of London, in order to be tried for his life in the high court of justice, 1651; but upon the mediation of John Milton and others, especially two godly aldermen of York, (to whom he had shown great civility when they had been taken prisoners in the north by some of the forces under William Marquis of Newcastle) he was saved, and had liberty allowed him as a prisoner at large."

Thus far the pleasing story is sufficiently proved to the honour of Milton: that Davenant endeavoured to return the favour is highly probable, from the amiable tenderneſs and benevolent activity of his character: perhaps this probability may seem a little strengthened by the following verses of Davenant, in a poem addreſsed to the king on his happy return:

> Your clemency has taught us to believe
> It wise, as well as virtuous, to forgive;
> And now the most offended shall proceed
> In great forgiving, till no laws we need;
> For law's slow progreſses would quickly end,
> Could we forgive as fast as men offend.

If Davenant was in any degree instrumental to the security of Milton, it is probable that he served him rather from gratitude than affection, as no two writers of the time were more different from each other in their religious and political opinions; that the poet laureate of Charles was utterly unconscious of those inestimable poetick powers which the blind secretary of the republick was providentially reserved to display, we may infer from a very remarkable couplet towards the close of a second poem, addreſsed by Davenant to the king, where, speaking of Homer, he ventures to aſsert that

" Heaven ne'er made but one, who, being blind,
Was fit to be a painter of the mind."

It is however very poſsible that Davenant might doubly conduce to the production of Paradise Lost; first, as one of those who exerted their influence to secure the author from molestation; and secondly, as affording by his Gondibert an incentive to the genius of Milton, to show how infinitely he could surpaſs a poem, which Hobbes, whose opinions he despised, had extravagantly extolled as the most exquisite production of the epick muse. In Aubrey's manuscript anecdotes of Milton it is said, that he began his Paradise Lost about two years before the return of the king, and finished it about three years after that event: the account appears the more probable, as the following lines in the commencement of the seventh book pathetically allude to his present situation:

More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchanged
To hoarse or mute, though fall'n on evil days,
On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues;
In darkneſs, and with dangers compaſs'd round,
And solitude; yet not alone, while thou
Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
Purples the east; still govern thou my song,
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
But drive far off the barbarous diſsonance
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
Of that wild rout, that tore the Thracian bard
In Rhodope; where woods and rocks had ears
To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
Both harp and voice: nor could the muse defend
Her son. So fail not thou who thee implores,
For thou art heavenly, she an empty dream.

How peculiarly affecting are these beautiful verses, when the history of the poet suggests that he probably wrote them while he was concealed in

an obscure corner of the city, that resounded with the triumphant roar of his intoxicated enemies; among whom drunkenneſs arose to such extravagance that even the festive royalists found it neceſsary to iſsue a proclamation, which forbade the drinking of healths. How poignant at this time must have been the personal and patriotick feelings of Milton, who had paſsed his life in animating himself and his country to habits of temperance, truth, and publick virtue, yet had the mortification of finding that country, so dear to him, now doubly disgraced; first by the hypocrisy and treacherous ambition of republicans, to whose pretended virtues he had given too easy credit, and now by the mean licentious servility of royalists, whose more open though not more dangerous vices, his upright and high toned spirit had ever held in abhorrence. For his country he had every thing to apprehend, from the blind infatuation with which the parliament had rejected the patriotick suggestion of Hale, (afterwards the illustrious chief justice) to establish constitutional limitations to the power of the king at the critical period of his reception. The neglect of this measure contributed not a little to subsequent evils; and the reign of Charles the Second was in truth deformed with all the publick misery and disgrace which Milton had predicted, when he argued on the idea of his re-admiſsion. For his own person, the literary champion of the people had no leſs to dread from the barbarity of publick vengeance, or from the private dagger of some overheated royalist, who, like the aſsaſsin of Dorislaus in Holland, and of Ascham in Spain, might think it meritorious to seize any opportunity of destroying a servant of the English republick; when royal government, restored to itself, could yet descend to authorize a mean and execrable indignity against the dead body of a man so magnanimous and so innocent as Blake, it was surely natural, and by no means unbecoming the spirit of Milton, to speak as he does in the preceding verses, of evil days and evil tongues, of darkneſs, and of danger.

"This darkneſs," says Johnson, "had his eyes been better employed, had undoubtedly deserved compaſsion." What! had Milton no title to compaſsion for his personal calamity, because he had nobly sacrificed his sight to what he esteemed an important discharge of his publick duty? Oh egregious morality! to which no feeling heart can subscribe.

No, say his implacable enemies, he lost his eyes in the vindication of wickedneſs; but admitting their aſsertion in its full force, justice and humanity still contend, that instead of diminishing, it rather doubles his claim to compaſsion. To suffer in a spirited defence of guilt, that we mistake and esteem as virtue, is perhaps of all pitiable misfortunes what a candid and considerate mind should be most willing to pity.

But Johnson proceeds to say, "of evil tongues for Milton to complain, required impudence at least equal to his other powers; Milton, whose warmest advocates must allow, that he never spared any asperity of reproach or brutality of insolence."

These are perhaps the most bitter words that were ever applied by an author, illustrious himself for great talents, and still more for Christian virtue, to a character pre-eminent in genius and in piety; by shewing to what a marvellous degree a very cultivated and devout mind may be exasperated by party rage, may they serve to caution every fervid spirit against that outrageous animosity which a difference of sentiment in politicks and religion is so apt to produce.

If in quiet study, at a very advanced period of life, and at the distance of more than a century from the days of the republick, if a philosopher so situated could be hurried by political heat to speak of Milton with such harsh intemperance of language, though writing under the friendly title of his biographer, with what indulgence ought we to view that asperity in Milton himself, which arose from the immediate preſsure of publick oppreſsion, and of private outrage; for his spirit had been inflamed not only by the sight of many national vexations, but by seeing his own moral character attacked with the most indecent and execrable calumny that can excite the indignation of insulted virtue. If the fascinating powers of his sacred poem, and the lustre of his integrity, have failed to soften the virulence of an aged moralist against him in our days, what must he not have had to apprehend from the raging paſsions of his own time, when his poetical genius had not appeared in its meridian splendour, and when most of his writings were considered as recent crimes against those who were entering on their career of triumph and revenge? Johnson indeed aſserts, in his barbarous censure on Milton's

exquisite picture of his own situation, that the poet, in speaking of his "danger, was ungrateful and unjust;" that the charge itself seems to be false, for it would be hard to recollect any reproach cast upon him, either serious or ludicrous, through the whole remaining part of his life." Yet Lauder, once the aſsociate of Johnson in writing against Milton, expreſsly affirms that it was warmly debated for three days, whether he should suffer death with the regicides or not, as many contended that his guilt was superiour to theirs. Lauder indeed mentions no authority for his aſsertion; and the word of a man so supremely infamous would deserve no notice, were not the circumstance rendered probable by the rancour and atrocity of party spirit. To what detestable exceſses this spirit could proceed, we have not only an example in Lauder himself, but in that collection of virulent invectives against Milton, composed chiefly by his contemporaries, which Lauder added as an appendix to his own most malignant pamphlet. The most singular of these invectives, whose scurrility is too groſs to be transcribed, has been imputed to that very copious writer, Sir Roger L'Estrange; and if a pen employed so savagely against Milton could obtain publick encouragement and applause, he might surely, without affectation or timidity, think himself exposed to the dagger of some equally hostile and more sanguinary royalist. L'Estrange, for such sufferings in the cause of royalty as really entitled him to reward, obtained, not long after the restoration, the revived but unconstitutional office of licenser to the preſs. It was happy for literature that he poſseſsed not that oppreſsive jurisdiction when the author of Paradise Lost was obliged to solicit an imprimatur, since the exceſs of his malevolence to Milton might have then exerted itself in such a manner, as to entitle both the office and its poſseſsor to the execration of the world. The licenser of that period, Thomas Tomkyns, chaplain to Archbishop Sheldon, though hardly so full of rancour as L'Estrange, (if L'Estrange was the real author of the ribaldry ascribed to him) was absurd or malignant enough to obstruct in some measure the publication of Paradise Lost. "He, among other frivolous exceptions," says Toland, "would needs suppreſs the whole poem, for imaginary treason in the following lines:

—— As when the sun new risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air,
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disast'rous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs.

By what means the poet was happily enabled to triumph over the malevolence of an enemy in office, we are not informed by the author who has recorded this very interesting anecdote; but from the peril to which his immortal work was exposed, and which the mention of a licenser to the preſs has led me to anticipate, let us return to his personal danger: the extent of this danger, and the particulars of his escape, have never been completely discovered. The account that his nephew gives of him at this momentous period is chiefly contained in the following sentence.

" It was a friend's house in Bartholomew Close where he lived till the act of oblivion came forth, which it pleased God proved as favourable to him as could be hoped or expected, through the interceſsion of some that stood his friends both in council and parliament; particularly in the house of commons, Mr. Andrew Marvel, a member for Hull, acted vigorously in his behalf, and made a considerable party for him."

Marvel, like the superiour author whom he so nobly protected, was himself a poet and a patriot. He had been aſsociated with Milton in the office of Latin secretary in 1657, and cultivated his friendship by a tender and respectful attachment. As he probably owed to that friendship the improvement of his own talents and virtues, it is highly pleasing to find that he exerted them, on different occasions, in establishing the security, and in celebrating the genius, of his incomparable friend. His efforts of regard on the present emergency are liberally described in the preceding expreſsions of Philips; and his friendly verses on the publication of the Paradise Lost deserve no common applause; for the records of literature hardly exhibit a more just, a more spirited, or a more generous compliment paid by one poet to another.

But the friendship of Marvel, vigilant, active, and beneficial as it was, could not secure Milton from being seized and hurried into confinement. It appears from the minutes of the house of commons, that he was a prisoner to their serjeant on the 15th of December. The particulars of his imprisonment are involved in darknefs; but Doctor Birch (whose copious Life of Milton is equally full of intelligence and candour) conjectures, with great probability, that on his appearing in publick (after the act of indemnity, and the adjournment of parliament on the 13th of September) he was seized in consequence of the order formerly given by the commons for his prosecution.

The exact time of his continuing in custody no researches have ascertained. The records of parliament only prove, that on the 15th of December the house ordered his release; but the same upright and undaunted spirit, which had made Milton in his younger days a resolute opposer of injustice and oppreſsion, still continued a characteristick of his declining life; and now induced him, disadvantageously situated as he was for such a contest, to resist the rapacity of the parliamentary officer, who endeavoured to extort from him an exorbitant fee on his discharge. He remonstrated to the house against the iniquity of their servant; and as the affair was referred to the committee of privileges, he probably obtained the redreſs that he had the courage to demand.

In this fortunate escape from the grasp of triumphant and vindictive power, Milton may be considered as terminating his political life. Commencing with his return from the Continent, it had extended to a period of twenty years; in three of these he had been afflicted with partial but increasing blindneſs, and in six he had been utterly blind.

His exertions in this portion of his life have exposed him to infinite obloquy; but his generous and enlightened country, though peculiarly inclined at present to discountenance the political principles of Milton, will remember, with becoming equity and pride, that the sublimest of her poets, though deceived, as he certainly was, by extraordinary pretenders to publick virtue, and subject to great illusion in his ideas of government, is entitled to the first of encomiums, the praise of being truly an honest man; since it was aſsuredly his constant aim to be the steady, disinterested

adherent and encomiast of truth and justice: hence we find him continually displaying those internal blefsings, which have been happily called the " clear witnefses of a benign nature, an innocent conscience, and a satisfied understanding."

Such is the imperfection of human existence, that mistaken notions and principles are perfectly compatible with elevation, integrity, and satisfaction of mind. The writer must be a slave of prejudice, or a sycophant to power, who would represent Milton as deficient in any of these noble endowments. Even Addison seems to lose his rare Christian candour, and Hume his philosophical precision, when these two celebrated, though very different authors, speak harshly of Milton's political character, without paying a due acknowledgment to the rectitude of his heart.

I trust the probity of a very ardent but uncorrupted enthusiast is, in some measure, vindicated in the course of these pages; happy if they promote the completion of his own manly wish, to be perfectly known; if they impref's a just and candid estimate of his merits and mistakes on the temperate mind of his country.

# LIFE OF MILTON

## PART III.

In beginning to contemplate the latter years of Milton, it may be useful to remark, that they afford perhaps the most animating leſson which biography, instructive as it is, can supply: they show to what noble use a cultivated and religious mind may convert even declining life, though imbittered by a variety of afflictions, and darkened by personal calamity.

On regaining his liberty he took a house in Holbourn, near Red-lion Fields, but soon removed to Jewin-street, and there married, in his fifty-fourth year, his third wife, Elizabeth Minshall, the daughter of a gentleman in Cheshire; as the misfortune of blindneſs seems particularly to require a female aſsistant, and yet almost precludes the unhappy sufferer from selecting such as might suit him, Milton is said to have formed this attachment on the recommendation of his friend Doctor Paget, an eminent physician of the city, to whom the lady was related. Some biographers have spoken harshly of her temper and conduct, but let me observe in justice to her memory, that the manuscript of Aubrey, to whom she was known, mentions her as "a gentle person, of a peaceful and agreeable humour." That she was particularly attentive to her husband, and "treated his infirmities with tenderneſs," is candidly remarked by Mr. Warton, in a posthumous note to the testamentary papers relating to Milton, which his indefatigable researches at length discovered, and committed to the preſs a few months before his own various and valuable labours were terminated by death. These very curious and interesting papers afford information respecting the latter days of the poet, which his late biographers were so far from poſseſsing, that they could not believe it existed. Indeed Mr. Warton himself had concluded that all farther inquiries for the will must be fruitleſs, as he had failed in a tedious and intricate search. At last,

however, he was enabled by the friendship of Sir William Scott to rescue from oblivion a curiosity so precious to poetical antiquarians. He found in the prerogative register the will of Milton, which, though made by his brother Christopher, a lawyer by profeſsion, was set aside from a deficiency in point of form; the litigation of this will produced a collection of evidence relating to the testator, which renders the discovery of these long forgotten papers peculiarly interesting. They show very forcibly, and in new points of view, his domestick infelicity, and his amiable disposition; the tender and sublime poet, whose sensibility and sufferings were so great, appears to have been almost as unfortunate in his daughters as the Lear of Shakspeare. A servant declares in evidence that her deceased master, a little before his last marriage, had lamented to her the ingratitude and cruelty of his children. He complained that they combined to defraud him in the economy of his house, and sold several of his books in the basest manner. His feelings on such an outrage, both as a parent and as a scholar, must have been singularly painful; perhaps they suggested to him those very pathetick lines, where he seems to paint himself in Samson Agonistes:

——— I, dark in light, exposed
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,
Within doors or without; still as a fool,
In power of others, never in my own,
Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.

Unfortunate as he had proved in matrimony, he was probably induced again to venture into that state by the bitter want of a domestick protector against his inhuman daughters; under which description I include only the two eldest: and in palliation even of their conduct, detestable as it appears, we may observe, that they are entitled to pity, as having been educated without the inestimable guidance of maternal tenderneſs, under a father afflicted with loſs of sight; they were also young: at the time of Milton's last marriage, his eldest daughter had only reached the age of fifteen, and Deborah, his favourite, was still a child of nine years.

His new connection seems to have afforded him what he particularly sought, that degree of domestick tranquillity and comfort eſsential to his perseverance in study, which appears to have been, through all the viciſsitudes of fortune, the prime object of his life; and while all his labours were under the direction of religion or of philanthropy, there was nothing too arduous or too humble for his mind.

In 1661 he published a little work, entitled "Accedence commenced Grammar," benevolently calculated for the relief of children, by shortening their very tedious and irksome progreſs in learning the elements of Latin. He published also, in the same year, another brief compoſition of Sir Walter Raleigh's, containing (like the former work of that celebrated man, which the same editor had given to the publick) a series of political maxims.

However vehement the enmity of various persons against Milton might have been, during the tumult of publick paſsions on the recent restoration, there is great reason to believe, that his extraordinary abilities and probity so far triumphed over the prejudices against him, that, with all his republican offences upon his head, he might have been admitted to royal favour, had he been willing to accept it. Richardson relates, on very good authority, that the post of Latin secretary, in which he had obtained so much credit as a scholar, was again offered to him after the restoration; that he rejected it, and replied to his wife, who advised his acceptance of the appointment, "You, as other women, would ride in your coach; for me, my aim is to live and die an honest man." Johnson discovers an inclination to discredit this story, because it does honour to Milton, and seemed inconsistent with his own ideas of probability; but his comments on the anecdote are rather sarcastically severe, than rationally just: "He that had shared authority either with the parliament or Cromwell," says Johnson, "might have forborne to talk very loudly of his honesty." How miserably narrow is the prejudice that cannot allow perfect honesty to many individuals of both sides, in a contest like that, which divided the nation in the civil wars. Undoubtedly there were men in each party, and men of great mental endowments, who acted, during that calamitous contention, according to the genuine dictates of conscience. Those, who

examine the conduct of Milton with impartiality, will be ready to allow, that he poſseſsed not only one of the most cultivated, but one of the most upright minds, which the records of human nature have taught us to revere.

His office indeed was of such a nature, that he might, without a breach of honesty, have resumed it under the king; but his return to it, though not absolutely dishonourable, would have ill accorded with that refined purity and elevation of character, which from his earliest youth it was the ambition of Milton to acquire and support. He would have lost much of his title to the reverence of mankind for his magnanimity, had he accepted his former office from Charles the Second, a personage whom he must have particularly despised as a profligate and servile tyrant, as ready to betray the honour of the nation, as he was careleſs of his own; a personage whom Milton could never have beheld without horror, in reflecting on his singular barbarity to his celebrated friend, that eccentrick but interesting character, Sir Henry Vane. The king, so extolled for his mercy, had granted the life of Sir Henry to the joint petition of the lords and commons; but after promising to preserve him, signed a warrant for his execution; one of the most inhuman and detestable acts of duplicity that was ever practised against a subject by his sovereign. It is to the fate of Vane, with others of that party, and to his own personal sufferings, that the great poet alludes in the following admirable reflections aſsigned to the Chorus in his Samson Agonistes:

Many are the sayings of the wise
In ancient and in modern books inroll'd,
Extolling patience as the truest fortitude;
And to the bearing well of all calamities,
All chances incident to man's frail life;
Consolatories writ
With studied argument, and much persuasion sought,
Lenient of grief and anxious thought:
But to the afflicted in his pangs their sound
Little prevails, or rather seems a tune

Harsh, and of diſsonant mood from his complaint;
Unleſs he feel within
Some source of consolation from above,
Secret refreshings, that repair his strength,
And fainting spirits uphold.
God of our fathers! what is man!
That thou towards him with hand so various,
Or might I say contrarious,
Temper'st thy providence through his short course,
Not evenly, as thou rulest
The angelick orders and inferiour creatures mute,
Irrational and brute.
Nor do I name of men the common rout,
That wandering loose about,
Grow up and perish, as the summer fly,
Heads without name, no more remember'd,
But such as thou hast solemnly elected,
With gifts and graces eminently adorn'd,
To some great work, thy glory,
And people's safety, which in part they effect:
Yet toward these thus dignified, thou oft,
Amidst their highth of noon,
Changest thy countenance, and thy hand, with no regard
Of highest favours past
From thee on them, or them to thee of service.
Nor only dost degrade them, or remit
To life obscured, which were a fair dismiſsion,
But throw'st them lower than thou didst exalt them high;
Unseemly falls in human eye,
Too grievous for the trespaſs or omiſsion;
Oft leavest them to the hostile sword
Of heathen and profane, their carcasses
To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captived;
Or to the unjust tribunals under change of times,

And condemnation of the ungrateful multitude.
If these they 'scape, perhaps in poverty
With sickneſs and disease thou bow'st them down,
Painful diseases and deformed,
In crude old age;
Though not disordinate, yet causeleſs suffering
The punishment of diſsolute days.

Warburton was the first, I believe, to remark how exactly these concluding lines describe the situation of the poet himself, afflicted by his loſs of property, and "his gout, not caused by intemperance;" the same acute, but very unequal, critick is by no means so happy in his observation, that Milton seems to have chosen the subject of this sublime drama for the sake of the satire on bad wives: it would be hardly leſs absurd to say, that he chose the subject of Paradise Lost for the sake of describing a connubial altercation. The nephew of Milton has told us that he could not ascertain the time when this drama was written; but it probably flowed from the heart of the indignant poet soon after his spirit had been wounded by the calamitous destiny of his friends, to which he alludes with so much energy and pathos. He did not design the drama for a theatre, nor has it the kind of action requisite for theatrical interest; but in one point of view the Samson Agonistes is the most singularly affecting composition that was ever produced by sensibility of heart and vigour of imagination. To give it this peculiar effect, we must remember that the lot of Milton had a marvellous coincidence with that of his hero, in three remarkable points; first, (but we should regard this as the most inconsiderable article of resemblance) he had been tormented by a beautiful but disaffectionate and disobedient wife; secondly, he had been the great champion of his country, and as such the idol of publick admiration; lastly, he had fallen from that highth of unrivalled glory, and had experienced the most humiliating reverse of fortune,

His foes' derision, captive, poor, and blind.

In delineating the greater part of Samson's sensations under calamity, he had only to describe his own. No dramatist can have ever conformed so literally as Milton to the Horatian precept,

——"Si vis me flere, dolendum est
Primum ipsi tibi."——

And if in reading the Samson Agonistes, we observe how many paſsages, expreſsed with the most energetick sensibility, exhibit to our fancy the sufferings and real sentiments of the poet, as well as those of his hero, we may derive from this extraordinary composition a kind of pathetick delight that no other drama can afford; we may applaud the felicity of genius, that contrived in this manner to relieve a heart overburdened with anguish and indignation, and to pay an half-concealed yet hallowed tribute to the memories of dear though dishonoured friends, whom the state of the times allowed not the afflicted poet more openly to deplore.

The concluding verses of the beautiful Chorus (which I have already cited in part) appear to me particularly affecting, from the persuasion that Milton in composing them addreſsed the two last immediately to Heaven, as a prayer for himself:

—— In fine,
Just, or unjust, alike seem miserable,
For oft alike both come to evil end.
So deal not with this once thy glorious champion,
The image of thy strength, and mighty minister.
What do I beg? how hast thou dealt already?
Behold him in his state calamitous, and turn
His labours, for thou canst, to peaceful end.

If the conjecture of this application be just, we may add, that never was the prevalence of a righteous prayer more happily conspicuous; and let me here remark, that however various the opinions of men may be concerning the merits or demerits of Milton's political character, the integrity of his heart appears to have secured to him the favour of providence;

since it pleased the giver of all good not only to turn his labours to a peaceful end, but to irradiate his declining life, with the most abundant portion of those pure and sublime mental powers, for which he had constantly and fervently prayed as the choicest bounty of Heaven.

At this period, his kind friend and physician, who had proved so serviceable to him in the recommendation of an attentive and affectionate wife, introduced to his notice a young reader of Latin, in that singular character Thomas Ellwood, the Quaker, who has written a minute history of his own life; a book which suggests the reflection, how strangely a writer may sometimes mistake his way in his endeavours to engage the attention of posterity; had the honest Quaker bequeathed to the world as circumstantial an account of his great literary friend, as he has done of himself, his book would certainly have ingrofsed no common share of publick regard: we are indebted to him however for his incidental mention of the great poet; and as there is a pleasing air of simplicity and truth in his narrative, I shall gratify the reader by inserting it with very little abridgment.

"John Milton, a gentleman of great note for learning throughout the learned world, having filled a publick station in former times, lived now a private and retired life in London; and having wholly lost his sight, kept always a man to read to him, which usually was the son of some gentleman of his acquaintance, whom in kindnefs he took to improve in his learning.

"By the mediation of my friend Isaac Penington with Doctor Paget, and of Doctor Paget with John Milton, was I admitted to come to him, not as a servant to him, which at that time he needed not, nor to be in the house with him, but only to have the liberty of coming to his house at certain hours when I would, and to read to him what books he should appoint me, which was all the favour I desired."

Ellwood was at this time an ingenious but undisciplined young man about three-and-twenty; his father, a justice of Oxfordshire, had taken him very unseasonably from school, with a view to lefsen his own expences; and this his younger son, after wasting some years at home, attached himself with great fervency to the sect of Quakers. His religious

ardour involved him in a long and painful quarrel with his father, and in many singular adventures. He united with his pious zeal a lively regard for literature; and, being grieved to find that his interrupted education had permitted him to acquire but a slender portion of clafsical learning, he anxiously sought the acquaintance of Milton in the hope of improving it.

" I went therefore," says the candid Quaker, " and took myself a lodging as near to his house, which was then in Jewin-street, as conveniently as I could, and from thenceforward I went every day in the afternoon, except on the first days of the week, and sitting by him in his dining-room, read to him such books in the Latin tongue as he pleased to hear me read.

" At my first sitting to read to him, observing that I used the English pronunciation, he told me, if I would have the benefit of the Latin tongue, not only to read and understand Latin authors, but to converse with foreigners either abroad or at home, I must learn the foreign pronunciation; to this I consenting, he instructed me how to sound the vowels: this change of pronunciation proved a new difficulty to me, but

——" Labor omnia vincit
Improbus."

" And so did I, which made my reading the more acceptable to my master. He on the other hand, perceiving with what earnest desire I pursued learning, gave me not only all the encouragement, but all the help he could; for having a curious ear, he understood by my tone when I understood what I read, and when I did not; and accordingly would stop me, examine me, and open the most difficult pafsages to me."

The clearnefs and simplicity of Ellwood's narrative brings us, as it were, into the company of Milton, and shows, in a very agreeable point of view, the native courtesy and sweetnefs of a temper, that has been strangely misrepresented as morose and austere.

Johnson, with his accustomed asperity to Milton, discovers an inclination to censure him for his mode of teaching Latin to Ellwood. But

Milton, who was instructing an indigent young man, had probably very friendly reasons for wishing him to acquire immediately the foreign pronunciation; and afsuredly the patience, good nature, and succefs with which he condescended to teach this singular attendant, do credit both to the disciple and the preceptor.

Declining health soon interrupted the studies of Ellwood, and obliged him to retire to the house of a friend and physician in the country. Here, after great suffering from sickneſs, he revived, and returned again to London.

"I was very kindly received by my master," continues the interesting Quaker, "who had conceived so good an opinion of me, that my conversation I found was acceptable, and he seemed heartily glad of my recovery and return; and into our old method of study we fell again, I reading to him,-and he explaining to me, as occasion required."

But learning, as poor Ellwood obſerves, was almost a forbidden fruit to him. His intercourse with Milton was again interrupted by a second calamity; a party of soldiers rushed into a meeting of Quakers that included this unfortunate scholar, and he was hurried with his friends from prison to prison: though ten pence was all the money he poſseſsed, his honest pride prevented his applying to Milton for relief in this exigence, and he contrived to support himself by his industry in confinement with admirable fortitude.

Moderate prosperity, however, visited at last this honest and devout man, affording him an agreeable opportunity of being useful to the great poet who had deigned to be his preceptor.

An affluent Quaker, who resided at Chalfont in Buckinghamshire, settled Ellwood in his family, to instruct his children; and in 1665, when the pestilence raged in London, Milton requested his friendly disciple to find a refuge for him in his neighbourhood.

"I took a pretty box for him," says this affectionate friend, "in Giles Chalfont, a mile from me, of which I gave him notice, and intended to have waited on him, and seen him well settled in it, but was prevented by imprisonment."

This was a second captivity that the unfortunate young man had to

sustain; for in consequence of a recent and most iniquitous persecution of the Quakers, he was apprehended at the funeral of a friend, and confined in the jail of Aylesbury.

"But being now released," continues Ellwood, "I soon made a visit to him, to welcome him into the country.

"After some common discourses had paſsed between us, he called for a manuscript of his; which being brought, he delivered to me, bidding me take it home with me and read it at my leisure; and when I had so done, return it to him, with my judgment thereupon.

"When I came home, and set myself to read it, I found it was that excellent poem which he entitled Paradise Lost.

"After I had with the best attention read it through, I made him another visit, and returned him his book, with due acknowledgment of the favour he had done me in communicating it to me. He asked me how I liked it, and what I thought of it, which I modestly and freely told him; and after some further discourse about it, I pleasantly said to him, Thou hast said much here of Paradise lost, but what hast thou to say of Paradise found? He made me no answer, but sat some time in a muse, then brake off that discourse, and fell upon another subject.

"After the sickneſs was over, and the city well cleansed, and become safely habitable again, he returned thither; and when afterwards I went to wait on him there, (which I seldom failed of doing whenever my occasions led me to London) he shewed me his second poem, called Paradise Regain'd, and in a pleasant tone said to me, "This is owing to you, for you put it into my head by the question you put to me at Chalfont, which before I had not thought of."

The personal regard of this ingenuous Quaker for Milton, and his giving birth to a composition of such magnitude and merit as Paradise Regain'd, entitle him to distinction in a life of his great poetical friend; and I have therefore rather transcribed than abridged his relation. My reader, I doubt not, will join with me in wishing that we had more sketches of the venerable bard thus minutely delineated from the life, in the colours of fidelity and affection.

From Ellwood's account, it appears that Paradise Lost was complete in

1665; Philips and Toland aſsert that it was actually published in the following year, but I believe no copy has been found of so early a date; the first edition, on the list of the very accurate Mr. Loſt, was printed by Peter Parker in 1667, and probably at the expence of the author, who sold the work to Samuel Simmons, by a contract dated the 27th of April in the same year.

The terms of this contract are such as a lover of genius can hardly hear without a sigh of pity and indignation. The author of Paradise Lost received only an immediate payment of five pounds, for a work which is the very masterpiece of sublime and refined imagination, a faculty not only naturally rare, but requiring an extraordinary coincidence of circumstances to cherish and strengthen it for the long and regular exercise eſsential to the production of such a poem. The bookseller's agreement, however, entitled the author to a conditional payment of fifteen pounds more; five to be paid after the sale of thirteen hundred copies of the first edition, and five in the same manner, both on a second and a third; the number of each edition was limited to fifteen hundred copies. The original size of the publication was a small quarto, and the poem was at first divided into ten books; but in the second edition the author very judiciously increased the number to twelve, by introducing a pause in the long narration of the seventh, and of the tenth, so that each of these books became two.

Simmons was a printer, and his brief advertisement to the work he had purchased is curious enough to merit insertion.

"Courteous reader, there was no argument at first intended to the book, but for the satisfaction of many that have desired it, I have procured it, and withal a reason of that which stumbled many others, why the poem rhymes not." Here we may plainly see that the novelty of blank verse was considered as an unpalatable innovation. The book however advanced so far in its sale that thirteen hundred were dispersed in two years. In April, 1669, the author received his second payment of five pounds; the second edition came forth in the year of his death, and the third in four years after that event: his widow, who inherited a right to the copy, sold all her claims to Simmons for eight pounds, in

December, 1680; so that twenty-eight pounds, paid at different times in the course of thirteen years, is the whole pecuniary reward which this great performance produced to the poet and his widow.

But, although the emolument which the author derived from his noblest production was most deplorably inadequate to its merit, he was abundantly gratified with immediate and fervent applause from several accomplished judges of poetical genius. It has been generally supposed that Paradise Lost was neglected to a mortifying degree on its first appearance, and that the exalted poet consoled his spirit under such mortification by a magnanimous confidence in the justice of future ages, and a sanguine anticipation of his poetical immortality: the strength and dignity of his mind would indeed have armed him against any poſsible disappointment of his literary ambition; but such was the reception of his work, that he could not be disappointed. Johnson has vindicated the publick on this point with judgment and succeſs. "The sale of books," he observes, "was not in Milton's age what it is in the present; the nation had been satisfied from 1623 to 1664, that is forty-one years, with only two editions of the works of Shakspeare, which probably did not together make one thousand copies; the sale of thirteen hundred copies in two years, in opposition to so much recent enmity, and to a style of versification new to all, and disgusting to many, was an uncommon example of the prevalence of genius." These remarks are perfectly just; but when their author proceeds to say, "the admirers of Paradise Lost did not dare to publish their opinion," he seems to forget the very spirited eulogies that were, during the life of the poet, bestowed on that performance: panegyrick can hardly aſsume a bolder tone than in the English and Latin verses addreſsed to Milton by Marvel and Barrow. He received other compliments not inferior to these. The muse of Dryden aſsured him that he poſseſsed the united excellencies of Homer and of Virgil; and, if we may rely on an anecdote related by Richardson, the Paradise Lost was announced to the world in a very singular manner, that may be thought not ill suited to the pre-eminence of the work. Sir John Denham, a man distinguished as a soldier, a senator, and a poet, came into the house of commons with a proof sheet of Milton's new composition, wet from the

prefs; and being questioned concerning the paper in his hand, he said it was "part of the noblest poem that ever was written in any language, or in any age." Richardson, whose active and liberal affection for the poet led him to search with intelligent alacrity and succefs for every occurrence that could redound to his honour, has recorded another incident, which must be particularly interesting to every lover of literary anecdote, as it discovers how the Paradise Lost was first introduced to Dryden, and with what fervency of admiration he immediately spoke of it. The Earl of Dorset, and Fleetwood Shepard, the friend of Prior, found the poem, according to this story, at a bookseller's in Little Britain, who lamenting its want of circulation, entreated the Earl to recommend it; Dorset, after reading it himself, sent it to Dryden, who said in returning the book, "This man cuts us all out, and the ancients too." These were probably the real sentiments of Dryden on his first perusal of the poem; but as that unhappy genius was not blest with the independant magnanimity of Milton, his opinions were apt to fluctuate according to his interest, and we find him occasionally disposed to exalt or degrade the transcendant performance, which he could not but admire. As the six celebrated verses, in which he has complimented the English Homer, so much resemble what he said of him to Lord Dorset, it is probable that those verses were written while his mind was glowing with admiration from his first survey of the Paradise Lost; and as long as Milton lived, Dryden seems to have paid him the deference so justly due to his age, his genius, and his virtue.

Aubrey relates, in the manuscript which I have repeatedly cited, that the poet laureate waited on Milton for the purpose of soliciting his permifsion to "put his Paradise Lost into a drama; Mr. Milton," says Aubrey, "received him civilly, and told him he would give him leave to tag his verses," an expreſsion that probably alluded to a couplet of Marvel's, in his poetical eulogy on his friend. The opera which Dryden wrote in consequence of this permifsion, entitled the State of Innocence, was not exhibited in the theatre, and did not appear in print till two years after the death of Milton, who is mentioned in becoming terms of veneration and gratitude in the preface. The drama itself is a very

singular and striking performance; with all the beauties and all the defects of Dryden's animated unequal versification, it has peculiar claims to the attention of those who may wish to investigate the respective powers of English rhyme and blank verse, and it may furnish arguments to the partizans of each; for if in many paſsages the images and harmony of Milton are deplorably injured by the neceſsity of rhyming, in a few instances perhaps rhyme has imparted even to the ideas of Milton new energy and grace. There are prefixed to this opera some very spirited but injudicious verses by poor Nat Lee, who has lavished the most exaggerated praise on his friend Dryden at the expence of the superiour poet.

It is highly pleasing to reflect that Milton, who had so many evils to sustain in the course of his checkered life, had yet the high gratification of being aſsured by very competent judges, that he had gloriously succeeded in the prime object of his literary ambition, the great poetical achievement which he projected in youth, and accomplished in old age. He probably received such animating aſsurances from many of his friends, whose applause being intended for his private satisfaction, has not descended to our time; but when we recollect the honours already mentioned, that were paid to the living poet, by Denham, Dryden, and Marvel, we may rest satisfied in the persuasion that he enjoyed a grateful earnest of his future renown; and according to the petition he addreſses to Urania,

Fit audience found, though few.

And if the spirit of a departed bard can be gratified by any circumstances of posthumous renown, it might gratify Milton to perceive that his divine poem was first indebted for general celebrity to the admiration of Sommers and of Addison, two of the most accomplished and most amiable of English names. Sommers promoted the first ornamented edition of Paradise Lost in 1688, and Addison wrote his celebrated papers on Milton in 1712.

But to return to the living author; in the year 1670 the great poet aspired to new distinction, by appearing in the character of an historian.



JOHN MILTON.

Ætat 62

*From the Original Drawing by Vertue in the Collection of*

*Tho.s Brand Hollis Esq.r*

*at the Hyde Essex.*

*Published June 1. 1794. by John & Josiah Boydell & Geo. Nicol.*

He had long meditated a work, which in his time was particularly wanted in our language, and which the greater cultivation bestowed by the present age on this branch of literature has not yet produced in perfection, an eloquent and impartial history of England. Milton executed only six books, beginning with the most early fabulous period, and closing with the Norman conquest. "Why he should have given the first part," says Johnson, "which he seems not to believe, and which is universally rejected, it is difficult to conjecture." Had the critick taken the trouble to peruse a few pages of the work in question his difficulty would have vanished; he would at least have found the motive of the author, if he had not esteemed it satisfactory.

"I have determined," says Milton, in speaking of the ancient and rejected British fables, "to bestow the telling over even of these reputed tales, be it for nothing else but in favour of our English poets and rhetoricians, who by their art will know how to use them judiciously." This sentiment implies a striking fondneſs for works of imagination, and a good natured disposition to promote them.

The historian discovers higher aims as he advances in his work, and expreſses a moral and patriotick desire, to make the leſsons suggested by the early calamities of this nation, a source of wisdom and virtue to his improving countrymen. The very paſsage, which was most likely to produce such an effect, was struck out of the publication by the Gothick hand of the licenser; an incident that seems to give new energy to all the noble arguments, which the injured author had formerly adduced in vindicating the liberty of the preſs.

The paſsage in question contained a very masterly sketch of the long parliament and aſsembly of divines, contrasting their situation and their misconduct, after the death of Charles the First, with those of the ancient Britons, when, by the departure of the Roman power, they were left (according to the expreſsion of the historian) "to the sway of their own councils." The author gave a copy of this unlicensed parallel to the celebrated Earl of Anglesey, a man distinguished by erudition, with a liberal respect for genius, and, though a minister of Charles the Second, a frequent visiter of Milton. This curious fragment was published in

1681, with a short preface, declaring that it originally belonged to the third book of Milton's history, and in the edition of his prose works in 1738 it was properly replaced. The poet would have succeeded more eminently as an historian, had his talents been exercised on a period more favourable to their exertion; and we have reason to regret his not having executed the latter part of his original intention, instead of dwelling on the meagre and dark annals of Saxon barbarity. In his early history, however, there are paſsages of great force and beauty; his character of Alfred in particular is worthy that engaging model of an accomplished monarch, and verifies a sentiment which Milton profeſsed, even while he was defending the commonwealth, that although a resolute enemy of tyrants, he was a sincere friend to such kings as merited the benediction of their people.

In 1671, the year after the first appearance of his history, he published the Paradise Regain'd, and Samson Agonistes.

Many groundleſs remarks have been made on the supposed want of judgment in Milton to form a proper estimate of his own compositions. "His last poetical offspring," says Johnson, "was his favourite; he could not, as Ellwood relates, endure to have Paradise Lost preferred to Paradise Regain'd." In this brief paſsage there is more than one misrepresentation. It is not Ellwood, but Philips, who speaks of Milton's esteem for his latter poem; and, instead of saying that the author preferred it to his greater work, he merely intimates that Milton was offended with the general censure, which condemned the Paradise Regain'd as infinitely inferiour to the other; instead of supposing therefore that the great poet was under the influence of an absurd predilection, we have only reason to conclude, that he heard with lively scorn such idle witticism as we find recorded by Toland, "that Milton might be seen in Paradise Lost, but not in Paradise Regain'd." His own accomplished mind, in which sensibility and judgment were proportioned to extraordinary imagination, most probably aſsured him, (what is indisputably true) that uncommon energy of thought and felicity of composition are apparent in both performances, however different in design, dimension, and effect. To censure the Paradise Regain'd, because it does not more resemble the preceding

poem, is hardly lefs absurd than it would be to condemn the moon for not being a sun, instead of admiring the two different luminaries, and feeling that both the greater and the lefs are visibly the work of the same divine and inimitable power.

Johnson has very liberally noticed one peculiarity in Milton, and calls it, with a benevolent happinefs of expreſsion, "a kind of humble dignity which did not disdain the meanest services to literature. The epick poet, the controvertist, the politician, having already descended to accommodate children with a book of rudiments, now, in the last years of his life, composed a book of logick for the initiation of students in philosophy; and published, 1672, Artis Logicæ plenior Institutio, ad Petri Rami Methodum concinnata, that is, a new scheme of logick, according to the method of Ramus."

It is so pleasing to find one great author speaking of another in terms which do honour to both, that I transcribe with singular satisfaction the preceding paſsage of the eminent biographer, whose frequent and injurious asperity to Milton I have so repeatedly noticed, and must continue to notice, with reprehension and regret.

In the very moment of delivering the just encomium I have commended, the critick discovers an intemperate eagernefs to revile the object of his praise, for he proceeds to say of Milton, "I know not whether even in this book he did not intend an act of hostility against the universities, for Ramus was one of the first oppugners of the old philosophy, who disturbed with innovations the quiet of the schools." Is there not a visible want of candour in showing so wildly a wish to impute a very inoffensive and meritorious work of science to a malevolent motive? Ramus was a man whose writings and memory were justly regarded by Milton; for he resembled our great countryman in temperance, in fortitude, in paſsion for study, and above all in a brave and inflexible opposition to ignorance, tyranny, and superstition. His life was a continued struggle with these mercilefs enemies, and he perished at last, with circumstances of peculiar barbarity, in the atrocious maſsacre of Saint Bartholomew.

A desire of rendering justice to the talents and virtues of such a suf-

ferer in the cause of learning, might surely be ascribed to Milton as a more probable and becoming motive on this occasion, than dark intentions of hostility against the universities. It is but a sorry compliment to those universities to insinuate, that He engaged in warfare against them, who republished a simple and seasonable treatise on the management of human reason.

The illustrious editor augmented the work of Ramus, and added to his system an abridgment of the Latin life which Fregius had written of its unfortunate author.

The long literary career of Milton was now drawing towards its termination, and it closed as it began, with a fervent regard to the interest of religion; alarmed by that encroachment which the Romish superstition was making under the connivance of Charles the Second, with the aid of his apostate brother, Milton published "a Treatise of true Religion, Heresy, Schism, Toleration, and the best Means to prevent the Growth of Popery." The patriotick scope of this work was to unite and consolidate the jarring sects of the Protestants, by persuading them to reciprocal indulgence, and to guard them against those impending dangers from Rome, which in a short period burst upon this island, and very happily terminated in our signal deliverance from many of those religious and political evils, which the spirit of Milton had, through a long life, most resolutely and conscientiously opposed.

His treatise against the Growth of Popery, which was published in 1673, was the last considerable performance that he gave to the world; but publication in some shape seems to have contributed to his amusement as long as he existed; in the same year he reprinted his smaller poems, with the tractate on Education; and in the year following, the last of his laborious life, he published his Familiar Letters, and a Declaration of the Poles in praise of their heroick sovereign, John Sobieski, translated from the Latin original. "A brief History of Moscovia," which he appears to have compiled, in the early part of his life, from various travellers who had visited that country, was published a few years after his death, and two of his compositions (both perhaps intended for the prefs) have probably perished; the first, a system of theology in Latin, that seems

to have been intrusted to his friend Cyriac Skinner; the second, an answer to a scurrilous libel upon himself, which his nephew supposes him to have suppreſsed from a just contempt of his reviler.

Soon after his marriage in 1661, he had removed from Jewin-street to a house in the Artillery Walk, leading to Bunhill-Fields, a spot that to his enthusiastick admirers may appear consecrated by his genius. Here he resided in that period of his days when he was peculiarly entitled to veneration: here he probably finished no leſs than three of his most admirable works; and here, with a diſsolution so easy, that it was unperceived by the persons in his chamber, he closed a life, clouded indeed by uncommon and various calamities, yet ennobled by the constant exercise of such rare endowments as render his name perhaps the very first in that radiant and comprehensive list of which England, the most fertile of countries in the produce of mental power, has reason to be proud.

For some years he had suffered much from the gout, and in July, 1674, he found his constitution so broken by that distemper, that he was willing to prepare for his departure from the world: with this view he informed his brother Christopher, who was then a bencher in the Inner Temple, of the disposition he wished to make of his property. "Brother," said the invalid, "the portion due to me from Mr. Powell, my first wife's father, I leave to the unkind children I had by her; but I have received no part of it; and my will and meaning is, they shall have no other benefit of my estate than the said portion, and what I have besides done for them, they having been very undutiful to me; and all the residue of my estate I leave to the disposal of Elizabeth, my loving wife." Such is the brief testament which Milton dictated to his brother, about the 20th of July, but which Christopher does not appear to have committed to paper till a few days after the decease of the testator, who expired on Sunday night, the 15th of November, 1674. "All his learned and great friends in London," says Toland, "not without a friendly concourse of the vulgar, accompanied his body to the church of Saint Giles's, near Cripplegate, where he lies buried in the chancel." This biographer, who, though he had the misfortune to think very differently from Milton on the great article of religion, yet never fails to speak of him with

affectionate respect, indulged a pleasing expectation when he wrote his life in the close of the last century, that national munificence would speedily raise a monument worthy of the poet, to protect and to honour his remains. To the discredit of our country, she has failed to pay this decent tribute to the memory of a man from whose genius she has derived so much glory; but an individual, Mr. Benson, in the year 1737, placed a bust of the great author in Westminster Abbey, an act of liberality that does him credit, though Johnson and Pope have both satirized the monumental inscription with a degree of cynical asperity; such asperity appears unseasonable, because all the ostentation so severely censured in Mr. Benson, amounts merely to his having said, in the plainest manner, that he raised the monument, and to his having added to his own name a common enumeration of the offices he poſseſsed; a circumstance in which candour might have discovered rather more modesty than pride. Affluence appears particularly amiable when paying a voluntary tribute to neglected genius, even in the grave; nor is Benson the only individual of ample fortune who has endeared himself to the lovers of literature by generous endeavours to promote the celebrity of Milton; affectionate admirers of the poet will honour the memory of the late Mr. Hollis, in recollecting that he devoted much time and money to a similar pursuit; and they will regret that he was unable to discover the Italian verses, and the marble bust which he diligently sought for in Italy, on a suggestion that such memorials of our poetick traveller had been carefully preserved in that country; but from this brief digreſsion on the recent admirers of Milton, let us return to his family at the time of his decease.

His will was contested by the daughters, whose undutiful conduct it condemned; being deficient in form, it was set aside, and letters of administration were granted to the widow, who is said to have allotted an hundred pounds to each daughter; a sum which being probably too little in their opinion, and too much in hers, would naturally produce reciprocal animosity and censure between the contending parties.

It has been already observed, that the recent discovery of this forgotten will, and the allegations annexed to it, throw considerable light on the domestick life of Milton; and the more insight we can gain into his social

and sequestered hours, the more we shall discover that he was not lefs entitled to private affection than to publick esteem; but let us contemplate his person, before we proceed to a minuter examination of his mind and manners.

So infatuated with rancour were the enemies of this illustrious man, that they delineated his form, as they represented his character, with the utmost extravagance of malevolent falsehood; he was not only compared to that monster of deformity the eyelefs Polypheme, but described as a diminutive, bloodlefs, and shrivelled creature. Expreſsions of this kind, in which absurdity and malice were equally apparent, induced him to expose the contemptible virulence of his revilers by a brief description of his own figure. He represents himself as a man of moderate stature, not particularly slender, and so far endued with strength and spirit, that, as he always wore a sword, he wanted not, in his healthy season of life, either skill or courage to use it; having practised fencing with great aſsiduity, he considered himself as a match for any antagonist, however superiour to him in muscular force; his countenance, he says, was so far from being bloodlefs, that when turned of forty he was generally allowed to have the appearance of being ten years younger; even his eyes, he adds, though utterly deprived of sight, did not betray their imperfection, but, on the contrary, appeared as speckleſs and as lucid as if his powers of vision had been peculiarly acute: "in this article alone," says Milton, "and much against my will, I am an hypocrite."

Such is the interesting portrait which this great writer has left us of himself; those who had the happineſs of knowing him personally, speak in the highest terms even of his personal endowments, and seem to have regarded him as a model of manly grace and dignity in his figure and deportment. "His harmonical and ingenuous soul," says Aubrey, "dwelt in a beautiful and well proportioned body;"

"In toto nusquam corpore menda fuit."

His hair was a light brown, his eyes dark grey, and his complexion so fair, that at college, according to his own expreſsion, he was styled "the

Lady," an appellation which he could not relish; but he consoled himself under absurd raillery on the delicacy of his person, by recollecting that similar raillery had been lavished on those manly and eminent characters of the ancient world, Demosthenes and Hortensius. His general appearance approached not in any degree to effeminacy; " his deportment," says Antony Wood, " was affable, and his gait erect and manly, bespeaking courage and undauntedneſs." Richardson, who laboured with affectionate enthusiasm to acquire and communicate all poſsible information concerning the person and manners of Milton, has left the two following sketches of his figure, at an advanced period of life.

" An ancient clergyman of Dorsetshire, Doctor Wright, found John Milton in a small chamber hung with rusty green, sitting in an elbow chair, and dreſsed neatly in black, pale but not cadaverous; his hands and fingers gouty, and with chalk-stones."

" He used also to sit in a grey coarse cloth coat at the door of his house, near Bunhill-Fields, in warm sunny weather, to enjoy the fresh air, and so, as well as in his room, received the visits of people of distinguished parts, as well as quality." It is probable that Milton in his youth was in some measure indebted to the engaging graces of his person for that early introduction to the politest society, both in England and abroad, which improved the natural sweetneſs of his character, (so visible in all his genuine portraits) and led him to unite with profound erudition, and with the sublimest talents, an endearing and cheerful delicacy of manners, very rarely attained by men whose application to study is continual and intense.

The enemies of Milton indeed, (and his late biographer I must reluctantly include under that description) have laboured to fix upon him a fictitious and most unamiable character of austerity and harshneſs: " What we know," says Johnson, " of Milton's character in domestick relations is, that he was severe and arbitrary. His family consisted of women, and there appears in his books something like a Turkish contempt of females, as subordinate and inferiour beings: that his own daughters might not break the ranks, he suffered them to be depreſsed by a mean and penurious education. He thought woman made only for

obedience, and man for rebellion." This is aſsuredly the intemperate language of hatred; and very far from being consonant to truth.

As it was thought a sufficient defence of Sophocles, when he was barbarously accused of mental imbecillity by his unnatural children, to read a portion of his recent dramatick works, so I am confident the citation of a few verses from our English bard may be enough to clear him from a charge equally groundleſs, and almost as ungenerous.

No impartial reader of genuine sensibility, will deem it poſsible that the poet could have entertained a Turkish contempt of females, who has thus delineated woman:

> All higher knowledge in her presence falls
> Degraded, wisdom in discourse with her
> Loses discountenanced, and like folly shows;
> Authority and reason on her wait,
> As one intended first, not after made
> Occasionally; and to consummate all,
> Greatneſs of mind, and nobleneſs their seat,
> Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
> About her, as a guard angelick placed.

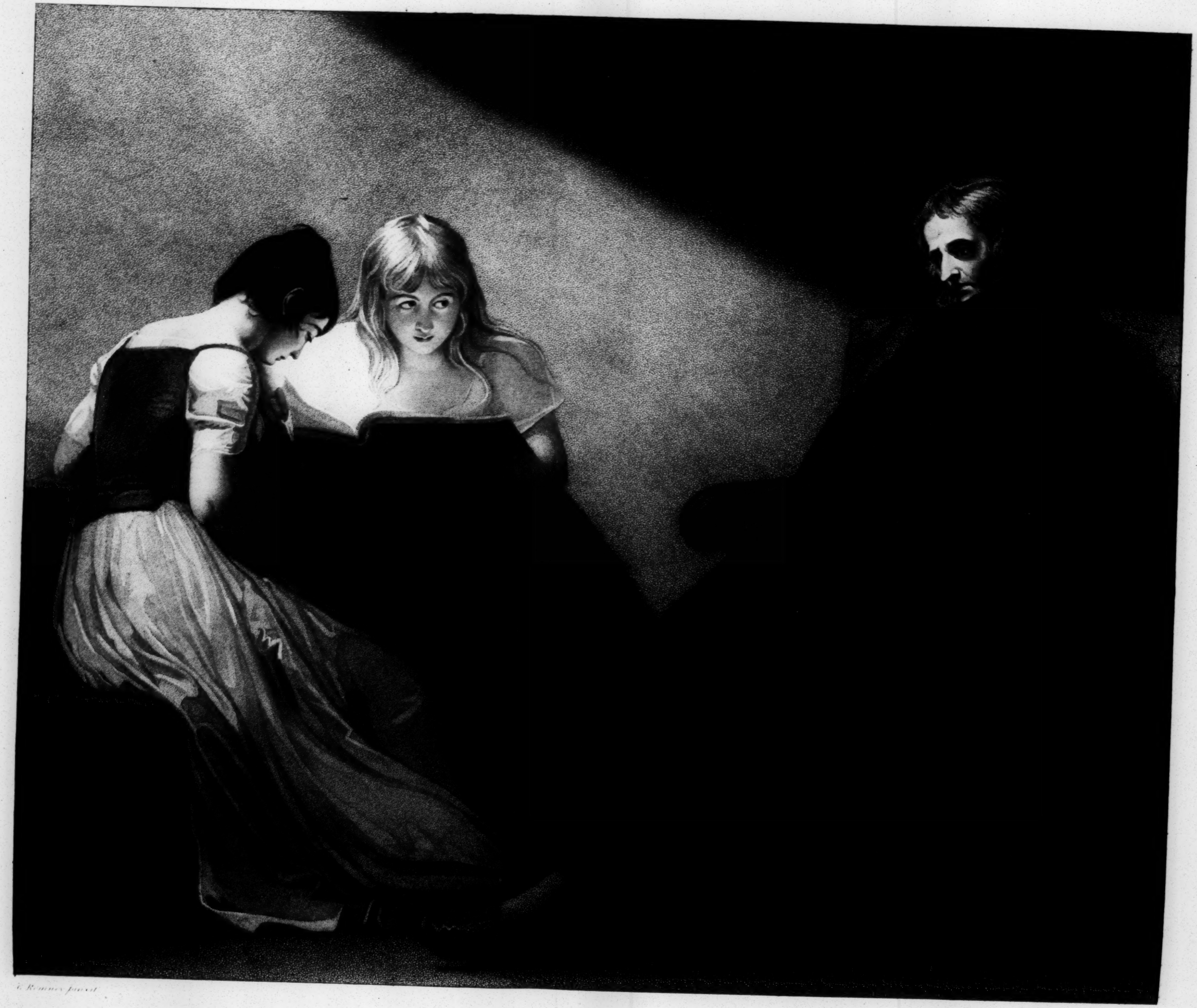
A description so complete, could arise only from such exquisite feelings in the poet as insured to every deserving female his tenderest regard. This argument might be still more enforced by a paſsage in the speech of Raphael; but the preceding verses are, I trust, sufficient to counteract the uncandid attempt of the acrimonious biographer to prejudice the fairest part of the creation against a poet, who has surpaſsed his peers in delineating their charms; whose poetry, a more enchanting mirrour than the lake that he describes in Paradise, represents their mental, united to their personal graces, and exhibits in perfection all the lovelineſs of woman.

As to Milton's depreſsing his daughters by a mean and penurious education, it is a calumny resting only on the report, that he would not allow them the advantage of learning to write; this is evidently false, since

Aubrey, who was personally acquainted with the poet, and who had probably consulted his widow in regard to many particulars of his life, expreſsly affirms, that his youngest daughter was his amanuensis; a circumstance, of which my friend Romney has happily availed himself, to decorate this life with a production of his pencil. This youngest daughter of Milton had the most frequent opportunities of knowing his temper, and she happens to be the only one of his children who has delivered a deliberate account of it; but her account, instead of confirming Johnson's idea of her father's domestick severity, will appear to the candid reader to refute it completely. "She spoke of him," says Richardson, "with great tenderneſs; she said he was delightful company, the life of the conversation, and that on account of a flow of subject, and an unaffected cheerfulneſs and civility."

It was this daughter who related the extraordinary circumstance, that she and one of her sisters read to her father several languages which they did not understand: it is remarkable that she did not speak of it as a hardship, nor could it be thought an intolerable grievance by an affectionate child, who thus aſsisted a blind parent in labouring for the maintenance of his family. Such an employment, however, must have been irksome, and the considerate father in finding that it was so, "sent out his children," according to the expreſsion of his nephew, "to learn some curious and ingenious sorts of manufacture, particularly embroideries in gold or silver." That he was no penurious parent is strongly proved by an expreſsion that he used in speaking of his will, when he declared, that "he had made provision for his children in his lifetime, and had spent the greatest part of his estate in providing for them."

It is the more barbarous to arraign the poet for domestick cruelty, because he appears to have suffered from the singular tenderneſs and generosity of his nature. He had reason to lament that exceſs of indulgence, with which he forgave and received again his disobedient and long alienated wife, since their re-union not only disquieted his days, but gave birth to daughters, who seem to have inherited the perverseneſs of their mother.



T. Rowlandson pinxit.

MILTON'S DAUGHTERS.

Engd. by Smith & Sculp.

Publish'd June 1.1793, by J. & J. Boydell, & G. Nicol, at the Shakspeare Gallery, Pall Mall, & 24 Cheapside, London.

The wisest and best men full oft beguiled,
With goodneſs principled, not to reject
The penitent, but ever to forgive,
Are drawn to wear out miserable days,
Entangled with a poisonous bosom snake.

These pathetick lines, in a speech of his Samson Agonistes, strike me as a forcible allusion to his own connubial infelicity; if in his first marriage he was eminently unhappy, his succeſs in the two last turned the balance of fortune in his favour: that his second wife deserved, poſseſsed, and retained his affection, is evident from his sonnet occasioned by her death; of the care and kindneſs which he had long experienced from the partner of his declining life, he spoke with tender gratitude to his brother, in explaining his testamentary intention. And we are probably indebted to the care and kindneſs, which the aged poet experienced from this affectionate guardian, for the happy accomplishment of his ineſtimable works. A blind and desolate father must be utterly unequal to the management of disobedient daughters conspiring against him; the anguish he endured from their filial ingratitude, and the base deceptions with which they continually tormented him, must have rendered even the strongest mind very unfit for poetical application. The marriage which he concluded by the advice and the aid of his friend Doctor Paget, seems to have been his only resource against a most exasperating and calamitous species of domestick disquietude; it appears therefore not unreasonable to regard those immortal poems which recovered tranquillity enabled him to produce as the fruits of that marriage: if matrimony has annihilated many a literary design, let it be remembered to its honour, that it probably gave birth to the brightest offspring of literature.

The two eldest daughters of Milton appear to me utterly unworthy of their father; but those who adopt the dark prejudices of Johnson, and believe with him that the great poet was an austere domestick tyrant, will find in their idea of the father an apology for his children, whose destiny in the world I shall immediately mention, that I may have occasion to speak of them no more. Ann, the eldest, who with a deformed person

had a pleasing face, married an architect, and died with her first infant in child-bed. Mary, the second, and apparently the most deficient in affection to her father, died unmarried. Deborah, who was the favourite of Milton, and who, long after his decease, discovered on a casual sight of his genuine portrait, very affecting emotions of filial tenderneſs and enthusiasm; even Deborah deserted him without his knowledge; not in consequence of his paternal severity, of which she was very far from complaining, but, as Richardson intimates, from a disgust she had conceived against her mother-in-law: on quitting the house of her father, she went to Ireland with a lady, and afterwards became the wife of Mr. Clark, a weaver in Spittal-Fields. As her family was numerous, and her circumstances not affluent, the liberal Addison made her a present, from his regard to the memory of her father, and intended to procure her some decent establishment, but died before he could accomplish his generous design. From Queen Caroline she received fifty guineas, a donation as ill proportioned to the rank of the donor, as to the mental dignity of the great genius, whose indigent daughter was the object of this unprincely munificence. Mrs. Clark had ten children, but none of them appear to have attracted publick regard, till Doctor Birch and Doctor Newton, two benevolent and respectable biographers of the poet, discovered his grand-daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Foster, keeping a little chandler's shop in the city, poor, aged, and infirm; they publickly spoke of her condition: Johnson was then writing, as the coadjutor of Lauder in his attempt to sink the glory of Milton; but, as the critick's charity was still greater than his spleen, he seized the occasion of recommending, under Lauder's name, this neceſsitous descendant of the great poet to the beneficence of his country; Comus was represented for her benefit in the year 1750; and Johnson, to his honour, contributed a prologue on the occasion, in which noble sentiments are nobly expreſsed.

The poor grand-daughter of Milton gained but one hundred and thirty pounds by this publick benefaction; this sum, however, small as it was, afforded peculiar comfort to her declining age, by enabling her to retire to Islington with her husband; she had seven children, who died before her; and by her own death it is probable that the line of the poet became

extinct. Let us hasten from this painful survey of his progeny, to the more enlivening contemplation of his rare mental endowments. The most diligent researches, into all that can elucidate the real temper of Milton, only confirm the opinion, that his native characteristicks were mildneſs and magnanimity. In controversy his mind was undoubtedly overheated; and paſsages may be quoted from his prose works that are certainly neither mild nor magnanimous; but if his controversial asperity is compared with the outrageous insolence of his opponents, even that asperity will appear moderation; in social intercourse he is represented as peculiarly courteous and engaging. When the celebrity of his Latin work made him esteemed abroad, many inquiries were made concerning his private character among his familiar acquaintance, and the result of such inquiry was, that mildneſs and affability were his distinguishing qualities. "Virum eſse miti comique ingenio aiunt," says the celebrated Heinsius, in a letter that he wrote concerning Milton in the year 1651 to Gronovius. Another eminent foreigner represents him in the same pleasing light, and from the best information. Voſsius, who was at that time in Sweden, and who mentions the praise which his royal patroneſs Christina bestowed on Milton's recent Defence of the English People, informs his friend Heinsius that he had obtained a very particular account of the author from a relation of his own, the learned Junius, who wrote the elaborate and interesting History of ancient Painting, who resided in England, and particularly cultivated the intimacy of Milton.

Indeed, when we reflect on the poet's uncommon tenderneſs towards his parents, and all the advantages of his early life, both at home and abroad, we have every reason to believe that his manners were singularly pleasing. He was fond of refined female society; and appears to have been very fortunate in two female friends of distinction, the Lady Margaret Ley, whose conversation consoled him when he was mortified by the desertion of his first wife, and the no leſs accomplished Lady Ranelaugh, who had placed her son under his care, and who probably aſsisted him, when he was a widower and blind, with friendly directions for the management of his female infants. A paſsage in one of his letters to her son suggests this idea; for he condoles with his young correspondent,

then at the university, on the loſs they would both sustain by the long absence of his most excellent mother, paſsing at that time into Ireland; "her departure must grieve us both," says Milton, "for to me also she supplied the place of every friend," nam et mihi omnium neceſsitudinum loco fuit, an expreſsion full of tenderneſs and regret, highly honourable to the lady, and a pleasing memorial of that sensibility and gratitude, which, I am persuaded, we should have seen most eminent in the character of Milton, if his English letters had been fortunately preserved; particularly his letters to this interesting lady, whose merits are commemorated in an eloquent sermon, preached by Bishop Burnet, on the death of her brother, that mild and accomplished model of virtue and of learning, Robert Boyle. Lady Ranelaugh must have been one of the most exemplary and engaging characters that ever existed, since we find she was the darling sister of this illustrious philosopher, and the favourite friend of a poet still more illustrious. Four of Milton's Latin letters are addreſsed to her son, and they blend, with moral precepts to the young student, respectful and affectionate praise of his mother.

In the Latin correspondence of Milton we have some vestiges of his sentiments concerning the authors of antiquity; and it is remarkable that in a deliberate opinion on the merits of Sallust, he prefers him to all the Roman historians. Milton, however, did not form himself as a writer on any Roman model; being very early most anxious to excel in literature, he wisely attached himself to those prime examples of literary perfection, the Greeks; among the poets he particularly delighted in Euripides and Homer; his favourites in prose seem to have been Plato and Demosthenes, the first peculiarly fit to give richneſs, purity, and lustre to the fancy; the second, to invigorate the understanding, and inspire the fervid energy of publick virtue. It is a very just remark of Lord Monboddo, that even the poetical speeches in Paradise Lost derive their consummate propriety and eloquence, from the fond and enlightened attention, with which the poet had studied the most perfect orator of Athens: the studies of Milton, however, were very extensive; he appears to have been familiar not only with all the best authors of antiquity, but with those of every refined language in Europe, Italian,

French, Spanish, and Portuguese. Great erudition has been often supposed to operate as an incumbrance on the finer faculties of the mind; but let us observe to its credit, the sublimest of poets was also the most learned; of Italian literature he was particularly fond, as we may collect from one of his letters to a profeſsor of that language, and from the ease and spirit of his Italian verses. To the honour of modern Italy it may be said, that she had a considerable share in forming the genius of Milton. In Taſso, her brightest ornament, he found a character highly worthy of his affectionate emulation, both as a poet and as a man; this accomplished personage had indeed ended his illustrious and troubled life several years before Milton visited his country, but he was yet living in the memory of his ardent friend Manso; and through the medium of Manso's conversation, his various excellencies made, I am persuaded, a forcible and permanent impreſsion on the heart and fancy of our youthful countryman. It was hardly the example of Triſsino, as Johnson supposes, that tempted Milton to his bold experiment of blank verse; for Triſsino's epick poem is a very heavy performance, and had sunk into such oblivion in Italy, that the literary friend and biographer of Taſso considers that greater poet, as the first person who enriched the Italian language with valuable blank verse; "our early works of that kind," says Manso, "are translations from the Latin, and those not succeſsful." The poem in blank verse, for which this amiable biographer applauds his friend, is an extensive work in seven books, on the seven days of the creation, a subject that has engaged the poets of many countries; the performance of Taſso was begun at the house of his friend Manso, and at the suggestion of a lady, the accomplished mother of the marquis. As this poem is formed from the Bible, and full of religious enthusiasm, it probably influenced the English visiter of Manso in his choice of blank verse. Taſso was a voluminous author, and we have reason to believe that Milton was familiar with all his compositions, as the exquisite eulogy on connubial affection in the Paradise Lost is founded on a prose exhortation to marriage, addreſsed by the Italian poet to one of his relations; but Milton, who was perhaps of all authors the least addicted to servile imitation, rarely imitates even Taſso in composition; in life indeed he copied him

more closely; and to his great poetical compeer of Italy he discovers a very striking resemblance, in application to study, in temperance of diet, in purity of morals, and in fervency of devotion. The Marquis of Villa, in closing his Life of Taſso, has enumerated all the particular virtues by which he was distinguished; these were all equally conspicuous in Milton; and we may truly say of him, what Manso says of the great Italian poet, that the preference of virtue to every other consideration, was the predominant paſsion of his life.

Enthusiasm was the characteristick of his mind; in politicks it made him sometimes too generously credulous, and sometimes too rigorously decisive; but in poetry it exalted him to such a degree of excellence as no man has hitherto surpaſsed; nor is it probable that in this province he will ever be excelled; for although in all the arts there are undoubtedly points of perfection much higher than any mortal has yet attained, still it requires such a coincidence of so many advantages, depending on the influence both of nature and of destiny, to raise a great artist of any kind, that the world has but little reason to expect productions of poetical genius superiour to the Paradise Lost. There was a bold, yet refined, originality of conception which characterized the mental powers of Milton, and give him the highest claim to distinction: we are not only indebted to him for having extended and ennobled the province of epick poetry, but he has another title to our regard, as the founder of that recent and enchanting English art which has embellished our country, and, to speak the glowing language of a living bard very eloquent in its praise,

——"Made Albion smile
One ample theatre of sylvan grace."

The elegant historian of modern gardening, Lord Orford, and the two accomplished poets who have celebrated its charms both in France and England, De Lille and Mason, have, with great justice and felicity of expreſsion, paid their homage to Milton, as the beneficent genius who bestowed upon the world this youngest and loveliest of the arts. The sublime vision of Eden, as Lord Orford truly calls it, proves indeed, as that

lively writer observes, how little the poet suffered from the lofs of sight. The native disposition of Milton, and his personal infirmity, conspired to make contemplation his chief businefs, and chief enjoyment: few poets have devoted so large a portion of their time to intense and regular study: yet he often made a pause of some months in the progrefs of his great work, if we may confide in the circumstantial narrative of his nephew.

" I had the perusal of it from the very beginning," says Philips, " for some years, as I went from time to time to visit him, in parcels of ten, twenty, or thirty verses at a time, (which being written by whatever hand came next, might pofsibly want correction as to the orthography and pointing) having, as the summer came on, not been shewed any for a considerable while, and desiring the reason thereof, was answered, that his vein never happily flowed but from the autumnal equinox to the vernal."

Johnson takes occasion, from this anecdote, to treat the sensations of Milton with sarcastick severity, and to deride him for submitting to the influence of the seasons. He lavishes ridicule not lefs acrimonious on the great poet, for having yielded to a fashionable dread of evils still more fantastick. " There prevailed in his time," says the critick, " an opinion that the world was in its decay, and that we have had the misfortune to be born in the decrepitude of nature." Johnson exposes, with great felicity of expreſsion, this absurd idea, of which his own frame of body and mind was a complete refutation; but instead of deriding the great poet for harbouring so weak a conceit, he might have recollected that Milton himself has spurned this chimera of timid imagination, in very spirited Latin verse, written in his twentieth year, and expreſsly against the folly of supposing nature impaired.

Ergone marcescet sulcantibus obsita rugis
Naturæ facies, et rerum publica mater
Omniparum contracta uterum sterilescet ab ævo?
Et se fafsa senem, male certis pafsibus ibit
Sidereum tremebunda caput?

How! Shall the face of nature then be ploughed
Into deep wrinkles; and shall years at last
On the great Parent fix a steril curse?
Shall ever she confeſs old age, and halt,
And palsy-smitten shake her starry brows?

The spirit of the poet was in truth little formed for yielding to any weakneſses of fancy, that could impede mental exertion; and we may consider it as one of the striking peculiarities in his character, that, with an imagination so excursive, he poſseſsed a mind so industrious.

His studious habits are thus described by his acquaintance, Aubrey, and others, who collected their account from his widow: he rose at four in the summer, at five in the winter, and regularly began the day by hearing a chapter of the Hebrew Bible; it was read to him by a man, who, after this duty, left him to meditation of some hours, and returning at seven, either read or wrote for him till twelve. He then allowed himself an hour for exercise, which was usually walking; and when he grew blind, the occasional resource of a swing: after an early and temperate dinner, he commonly allotted some time to musick, his favourite amusement; and his own musical talents happily furnished him with a pleasing relaxation from his severer pursuits; he was able to vary his instrument, as he played both on the baſs-viol and the organ, with the advantage of an agreeable voice, which his father had probably taught him to cultivate in his youth.

This regular custom of the great poet, to indulge himself in musical relaxation after food, has been recently praised as favourable to mental exertion (in producing all the good effects of sleep, and none of its disadvantages) by an illustrious scholar, who, like Milton, unites the paſsion and the talent of poetry, to habits of intense and diversified application. Sir William Jones, in the third volume of Asiatick Researches, has recommended, from his own experience, this practice of Milton; who from musick returned to study; at eight he took a light supper, and at nine retired to bed.

If such extreme regularity could be preserved at any period, it must

have been in the closing years of his life. While he was in office, his time was undoubtedly much engaged, not only by official attendance, but by his intercourse with foreigners, as the parliament allowed him a weekly table for their reception. The Latin compositions of Milton had rendered him on the Continent an object of idolatry; "and strangers," says Wood, (who was far from being partial to his illustrious contemporary) "visited the house where he was born." Even in his latter days, when he is supposed to have been neglected by his countrymen, intelligent foreigners were solicitous to converse with him, as an object of their curiosity and veneration. They regarded him, and very justly, as the prime wonder of England; for he was in truth a person so extraordinary, that it may be questioned if any age or nation has produced his parallel. Is there in the records of literature an author to be found, who, after gaining such extensive celebrity as a political disputant, cast off the mortal vesture of a polemick, and arose in the purest splendour of poetical immortality?

Biographers are frequently accused of being influenced by affection for their subject; to a certain degree it is right that they should be so: for what is biography in its fairest point of view? a tribute paid by justice and esteem to genius and to virtue; and never is this tribute more pleasing or more profitable to mankind than when it is liberally paid, with all the fervour and all the fidelity of friendship: the chief delight, and the chief utility that arises from this attractive branch of literature, consists in the affectionate interest which it displays and communicates in favour of the talents and probity that it aspires to celebrate. Hence the most engaging pieces of biography are those, that have been written by relations of the deceased. This remark is exemplified in the Life of Agricola by Tacitus, and in that of Racine, the dramatick poet, written by his son, (who was also a poet) and addreſsed to his grandson. It has been the lot of Milton to have his life frequently described, and recently by a very powerful author, who, had he loved the character he engaged to delineate, might perhaps have satisfied the admirers of the poet, and closed the list of his numerous biographers; but the very wonderful mind of Johnson was so embittered by prejudice, that in delineating a

character confeſsedly pre-eminent in elegant accomplishments, in genius, and in piety, he perpetually endeavours to represent him as unamiable; and, instead of attributing any mistaken opinions that he might entertain, to such sources as charity and reason conspire to suggest, imputes them to supposed vices in his mind, most foreign to his nature, and the very worst that an enemy could imagine.

In the course of this narrative I have considered it as a duty incumbent upon me to notice, and counteract as they occurred, many important strokes of the hostility which I am now lamenting; these become still more remarkable in that portion of the biographer's labour to which I am at length arrived; it is in diſsecting the mind of Milton, if I may use such an expreſsion, that Johnson indulges the injurious intemperance of his hatred. "It is to be suspected," he says, "that his predominant desire was to destroy rather than establish, and that he felt not so much the love of liberty, as repugnance to authority." Such a suspicion may indeed be harboured by political rancour, but it must be in direct opposition to justice and truth; for of all men who have written or acted in the service of liberty, there is no individual who has proved more completely, both by his language and his life, that he made a perfect distinction between liberty and licentiousneſs. No human spirit could be more sincerely a lover of just and beneficent authority, for no man delighted more in peace and order, no man has written more eloquently in their praise, or given sublimer proofs of his own personal attachment to them, by the regulation of his own orderly and peaceful studies. If he hated power, as Johnson aſserts, in every established form, he hated not its salutary influence, but its pernicious exertions. Vehement as he occasionally was against kings and prelates, he spoke of the sectaries with equal indignation and abhorrence, when they also became the agents of persecution; and as he had fully seen, and has very forcibly exposed, the groſs failings of republican reformers, had his life been extended long enough to witneſs the revolution, which he might have beheld, without suffering the decrepitude or imbecillity of extreme old age, he would probably have exulted as warmly as the staunchest friend of our present constitution can exult, in that temperate and happy reformation of monarchical enormities.

Johnson also intimates, that he was " a shallow politician who supposed money to be the chief good;" though, with singular inconsistency, he confeſses, that " fortune appears not to have had much of his care."

Money, in fact, had so little influence over the elevated mind of Milton, that from his want of attention to it, he sustained such loſses as, according to his nephew's expreſsion, " might have ruined a man leſs temperate than he was." Two thousand pounds he is said to have lost by entrusting it to government, and as much in a private loan without sufficient security.

" Towards the latter part of his time," says one of his early biographers, " he contracted his library, both because the heirs he left could not make a right use of it, and that he thought he might sell it more to their advantage, than they could be able to do themselves. His enemies reported that poverty constrained him thus to part with his books; and were this true, it would be indeed a great disgrace, not to him, (for persons of the highest merits have been often reduced to that condition) but to any country, that should have no more regard to probity or learning. This story, however, is so false, that he died worth fifteen hundred pounds, besides all his goods."

Such are the remarks of Toland on the pecuniary circumstances of the poet; they show, with becoming spirit, that he was not reduced by absolute indigence to the sale of his library; yet every reader, whose literary feelings are acute, must regret that the old age of Milton was not guarded and enlivened by such affluence, as might have saved him from a measure, in which those, who have a paſsion for books, must suppose him to have suffered some degree of mortification. The neceſsities, into which many deserving men of letters have fallen towards the close of life, and in various countries, may be regarded as an universal disgrace to civilized society, which the improving refinement and liberality of mankind ought effectually to remove. Literature, which is so eminently beneficial to a nation, is frequently ruinous to worthy individuals most fervently attached to it; and it should be regarded as a duty, therefore, by every polished people to provide a publick fund, which might afford a becoming competence to the advanced life of every illustrious scholar,

whose publick labours entitle him to that honourable distinction. Such meritorious veterans in literature as Milton, and his late aged biographer, should have been preserved, in their declining days, from every shadow of indigence, by the publick gratitude of the nation, to whom they had devoted their intellectual service. What friend to letters and to genius could fail to wish affluent comfort to the closing life of such authors, however he might condemn the excefses of republican severity in the one, or those of servile and censorial bigotry in the other?

There can hardly be any contemplation more painful than to dwell on the virulent excefses of eminent and good men; yet the utility of such contemplation may be equal to its pain. What mildnefs and candour should it not inftil into ordinary mortals, to observe that even genius and virtue weaken their title to respect, in proportion as they recede from that evangelical charity, which should influence every man in his judgment of another.

The strength and the acutenefs of sensation, which partly constitute genius, have a great tendency to produce virulence, if the mind is not perpetually on its guard against that subtle, insinuating, and corrosive pafsion, hatred against all whose opinions are opposite to our own. Johnson profefsed in one of his letters to love a good hater; and in the Latin correspondence of Milton there are words that imply a similarity of sentiment; they both thought there might be a sanctified bitternefs, to use an expreſsion of Milton, towards political and religious opponents. Yet surely these two devout men were both wrong, and both in some degree unchristian in this principle. To what singular iniquities of judgment such a principle may lead, we might perhaps have had a most striking and a double proof, had it been pofsible for these two energetick writers to exhibit alternately a portrait of each other. Milton, adorned with every graceful endowment, highly and holily accomplished as he was, appears, in the dark colouring of Johnson, a most unamiable being; but could he revisit earth in his mortal character, with a wish to retaliate, what a picture might be drawn by that sublime and offended genius, of the great moralist who has treated him with such excefs of asperity! The pafsions are powerful colourists, and marvellous adepts in the art of

exaggeration; but the portraits executed by love (famous as he is for overcharging them) are infinitely more faithful to nature, than gloomy sketches from the heavy hand of hatred; a paſsion not to be trusted or indulged, even in minds of the highest purity and power; since hatred, though it may enter the field of contest under the banners of justice, yet generally becomes so blind and outrageous from the heat of contention, as to execute, in the name of virtue, the worst purposes of vice. Hence arises that species of calumny the most to be regretted, the calumny lavished by men of talents and worth on their equals or their superiours, whom they have rashly and blindly hated for a difference of opinion. To such hatred the fervid and opposite characters, who gave rise to this observation, were both more inclined perhaps by nature, and by habit, than Christianity can allow. The freedom of these remarks on two very great and equally devout, though different, writers, may possibly offend the partizans of both. In that case my consolation will be, that I have endeavoured to speak of them with that temperate though undaunted sincerity, which may satisfy the spirit of each in a purer state of existence.

There is one characteristick in Milton, which ought to be considered as the chief source and support of his talents, his happineſs, and his fame; I mean his early and perpetual attachment to religion. It must gratify every Christian to reflect, that the man of our country most eminent for energy of mind, for intenseneſs of application, and for franknеſs and intrepidity in aſserting whatever he believed to be the cause of truth, was so confirmedly devoted to Christianity, that he seems to have made the Bible not only the rule of his conduct, but the prime director of his genius; his poetry flowed from the Scripture, as if his unparalleled poetical powers had been expreſsly given him by Heaven, for the purpose of imparting to religion such lustre, as the most splendid of human faculties could bestow. And, as in the Paradise Lost the poet seems to emulate the sublimity of Moses and the Prophets, it appears to have been his wish, in the Paradise Regain'd, to copy the sweetneſs and simplicity of the milder Evangelists. If the futile remarks, that were made upon the latter work, on its first appearance, excited the spleen of the great author,

he would probably have felt still more indignant, could he have seen the comment of Warburton. That disgusting writer, whose critical dictates form a fantastick medley of arrogance, acuteneſs, and abſurdity, has aſſerted that the plan of Paradise Regain'd is very unhappy, and that "nothing was easier than to have invented a good one."

Much idle censure seems to have been thrown on more than one of Milton's poetical works, from want of due attention to the chief aim of the poet: if we fairly consider it in regard to Paradise Regain'd, the aim I allude to, as it probably occasioned, will completely justify the plan, which the presumptuous critick has so superciliously condemned. Milton had already executed one extensive divine poem, peculiarly distinguished by richneſs and sublimity of description; in framing a second, he would naturally wish to vary its effect; to make it rich in moral sentiment, and sublime in its mode of unfolding the highest wisdom that man can learn; for this purpose it was neceſsary to keep all the ornamental parts of the poem in due subordination to the preceptive. This delicate and difficult point is accomplished with such felicity, they are blended together with such exquisite harmony and mutual aid, that instead of arraigning the plan, we might rather doubt if any poſsible change could improve it. Aſsuredly there is no poem of epick form, where the sublimist moral instruction is so forcibly and abundantly united to poetical delight: the splendour of the poet does not blaze indeed so intensely as in his larger production; here he resembles the Apollo of Ovid, softening his glory in speaking to his son, and avoiding to dazzle the fancy, that he may descend into the heart. His dignity is not impaired by his tenderneſs. The Paradise Regain'd is a poem, that deserves to be particularly recommended to ardent and ingenuous youth, as it is admirably calculated to inspire that spirit of self-command, which is, as Milton esteemed it, the truest heroism, and the triumph of Christianity.

It is not my intention to enter into a critical analysis of the beauties and the blemishes, that are visible in the poetry of Milton, not only because Addison and Johnson have both written admirably on his greatest work, but because my most excellent friend the poet (whose

spirit I esteem most congenial to that of Milton) is engaged in such illustrations of his honoured predeceſsor; I shall therefore confine myself to a single eſsay, detached from this narrative, under the title of Conjectures on the Origin of Paradise Lost.

I must not however omit to speak here, as I have engaged to do, of the character bestowed by Johnson on the principal performance of the poet; the greatest part of that character is perhaps the most splendid tribute, that was ever paid by one powerful mind to another. Aristotle, Longinus, and Quintilian, have not spoken of their favourite Homer with more magnificence of praise; yet the character, taken altogether, is a golden image, that has lower parts of iron and of clay. The critick seems to prepare a diadem of the richest jewels; he places them most liberally on the head of the poet; but in the moment of adjusting his radiant gift, he breathes upon it such a vapour of spleen as almost annihilates its lustre. After displaying in the noblest manner many of the peculiar excellencies in the poem, he says, "its perusal is a duty rather than a pleasure; we read Milton for instruction, retire haraſsed and overburdened, and look elsewhere for recreation; we desert our master, and seek for companions."

Injurious as these remarks are to the poet, let us ascribe them not to the virulence of intended detraction, but to the want of poetical sensibility in the critick; a want that may be sufficiently proved, by comparing this account of the effect produced by Paradise Lost on his own feelings, with its effect on a spirit truly poetical.

That enchanting poem, the Task, very happily furnishes such an illustration; it is thus that a mind attuned by nature to poetry describes the effect in question, as produced even in childhood:

"Then Milton had indeed a poet's charms,
New to my taste; his Paradise surpaſs'd
The struggling efforts of my boyish tongue
To speak its excellence: I danced for joy."— Cowper.

But the little delight that Johnson confeſses himself to have taken in the poetry of Milton, was rather his misfortune than his fault; it merits pity

more than reproach, as it partly arose from constitutional infelicity, and the very wide difference between the native turn of his mind and that of the poet: never were two spirits lefs congenial, or two Christian scholars who differed more completely in their sentiments of poetry, politicks, and religion. In temperament, as well as in opinions, they were the reverse of each other; the one was sanguine to excefs, the other melancholy in the extreme; Milton

> " Might sit in the centre, and enjoy bright day:"

but Johnson

> " Benighted walk'd under the mid-day sun;
> Himself was his own dungeon."

Such was the great contrast between these two extraordinary men, that although they were both equally sincere in their attachment to Christianity, and both distinguished by noble intellectual exertions in the service of mankind, the critick was naturally disqualified for being a fair and a perfect judge of the poet. My regard for a departed and meritorious writer (of great powers, but constitutionally unhappy) is such, that I would rather ascribe to any cause, than to mere envious malignity, his outrages against the poetical glory of Milton, which, from the force and celebrity of the very admirable but too austere work that contains them, it becomes the duty of a more recent biographer to expose.

For example, when Johnson says that Milton wrote " no language, but formed a Babylonish dialect, harsh and barbarous;" though it would be difficult to pronounce a critical censure more bitter, or more injurious, we may impute it not to a malevolent desire of depreciating the poet, but to a natural want of ear for that harmony, which the critick condemns as discord. On this article, the most harmonious of our bards has been very happily vindicated by men of science and taste. Doctor Foster and Lord Monboddo have shewn Milton to be one of the most consummate artificers of language, that ever gave either energy or grace to words; and Mr. Loft, in the preface to his recent edition of Paradise Lost, describes the majestick flow of his numbers with such truth and eloquence, as render

ample justice to the insulted dignity of the poet. The insult, grofs as it may be thought, loses much of its force, when we recollect the inconsistency of the critick, who, though in his latter work he condemns the language of Milton as "harsh and barbarous," had before observed, with more truth, in the Rambler, that the poet "excelled as much in the lower as in the higher parts of his art, and that his skill in harmony was not lefs than his invention or his learning."

But the praise as well as the censure of Johnson on this article, could not be the result of perfect perception; for the monotony in his own blank verse, and some of his remarks, in the Rambler, on particular lines of Milton, are striking proofs, that although he was a melodious writer himself, in the common measures of rhyme, and in dignified prose, yet he never entered, with perfect intelligence and feeling, into the musical graces of Miltonick composition. He was indeed as far from enjoying the poet's ear, for the varied modulations and extensive compafs of metrical harmony, as he was from pofsefsing the mild elegance of his manners, or the cheerful elevation of his mind.

There is a striking resemblance between the poetical and the moral character of Milton; they were both the result of the finest dispositions for the attainment of excellence that nature could bestow, and of all the advantages that ardour and perseverance in study and discipline could add, in a long course of years, to the beneficent prodigality of nature; even in infancy he discovered a pafsion for glory; in youth he was attached to temperance; and arriving at manhood, he formed the magnanimous design of building a lofty name upon the most solid and secure foundation:

——"He all his study bent
To worship God aright, and know his works
Not hid; nor those things last, that might preserve
Freedom and peace to men."

In a noble consciousnefs of his powers and intentions, he was not afraid to give, in his early life, a most singular promise to his country, of producing such future works as might redound to her glory; and though

such personal calamities fell upon him, as might fairly have absolved him from that engagement, yet never was any promise more magnificently fulfilled. Seneca has considered a man of resolution, struggling with adversity, as a spectacle worthy of God; our resolute countryman not only struggled with adversity, but, under a peculiar load of complicated calamities, he accomplished those works, that are justly reckoned among the noblest offspring of human genius. In this point of view, with what pathetick grandeur is the poet invested! In contemplating the variety of his sufferings, and his various mental achievements, we may declare, without any extravagance of praise, that, although sublimity is the predominant characteristick of Milton's poem, his own personal character is still more sublime.

His majestick pre-eminence is nobly described in the following verses of Akenside, a poet who bore some affinity to Milton in the ardour of his mind, whose sentiments are always noble, though not always accompanied by a graceful felicity of expreſsion.

> " Mark how the dread Pantheon stands
> Amid the domes of modern hands;
> Amid the toys of idle state,
> How simply, how severely great!
> Then turn, and while each western clime
> Presents her tuneful sons to time,
> So mark thou Milton's name;
> And add, thus differs from the throng
> The spirit which inform'd thy awful song,
> Which bade thy potent voice protect thy country's fame."

The powers of Milton indeed are so irresistible, that even those, whom the blindneſs of prejudice has rendered his enemies, are constrained to regard him as an object of admiration. In this article, posterity, to whom he made a very interesting appeal, has done him ample justice; still he is more admired than beloved; yet, in granting him only admiration, we ungenerously withhold the richest half of that posthumous reward, for

which he laboured so fervently; we may be confident that he rather wished to excite the affection, than the applause, of mankind; and afsuredly he has the noblest title to both, the title of having exerted superlative genius and literary ambition under the constant influence of religious philanthropy. In proportion as our country has advanced in purity of taste, she has applauded the poet; and in proportion as she advances in liberality of sentiment, she will love the man; but love in this aspect is more volatile than admiration, and a beneficent genius may be easily deprived of it by the detraction of an enemy, or the mistake of a friend: Milton has suffered not a little from both: and indeed if one singular mistake of his friends should prevail, he could hardly become an object of general affection. What votary of the muses could love a poet, however excellent in that capacity, who represented it as a crime in a captive monarch, to have made the poetry of Shakspeare the companion of his solitude? Credulity has imagined that Milton was such a barbarous Goth. Nor is this the suggestion of his enemies; even Warton, the liberal defender of his poetical reputation, and several living writers of eminence, have lavished their censures on Milton, from a too hasty belief, that puritanical prejudices had hurried him into this rancorous absurdity.

Their censures are all founded on a mistake; but the merit of correcting it belongs not to me; Mr. Waldron, the sensible and modest editor of a miscellany entitled the Literary Museum, in a note to Roscius Anglicanus, has in a very liberal manner collected and refuted the charges against Milton on this point; and abundantly proved, that, instead of censuring the unfortunate Charles for amusing himself with Shakspeare, he only censured him for imitating the religious hypocrisy of Richard the Third so closely, as to utter the very sentiments, that are afsigned to Richard in the page of the dramatick poet.

Milton undoubtedly thought, what an ardent political writer has not scrupled to afsert, that "Charles the First lived and died a hypocrite." These two acute judges of mankind were, I believe, mistaken in this idea: it seems more probable that this unfortunate prince was flattered into a persuasion, that he was really the meritorious martyr, his adherents

endeavoured to represent him. But whatever his genuine character might be, the severe sentiments, that Milton entertained of the king, and the delusive hopes, that he cherished of the protector, had equally their source in the virtuous ardour of his own spirit.

The consciousnefs of his integrity, when time fully unveiled to him some illusions, gave that tranquillity and vigour to his declining days, which enabled him to produce his astonishing poems, not more astonishing from their intrinsick merit, than from the period of their production; so that his poetry, in this point of view, may be regarded both as the offspring and the witnefs of his virtue. The world had never been enriched with his two poems on Paradise, if their great author, when he was, according to his own true and pathetick description,

In darknefs, and with dangers compafs'd round,

had not in some little degree resembled the hero of his latter poem; and, like that hallowed personage, whom he delineates so divinely, amid the darknefs and the fiends of the desert,

Sat unappall'd in calm and sinlefs peace.

Yet to such misrepresentation has the life and the poetry of Milton been exposed, that both have been considered as too austere to be amiable; though afsuredly, both in the one and the other, the most engaging qualities are admirably united to the most awful, the graceful and the tender, to the grand and the sublime.

The attractions of his muse have triumphed over obloquy; and, in the estimation of the world, she is justly thought to resemble the enchanting Eve of the poet,

—— Adorn'd
With what all earth, or Heaven could bestow,
To make her amiable.

But equal justice has not hitherto been rendered to the personal virtues of the author; it has therefore been my chief aim, in a faithful delineation

of his life, to make Milton rather more beloved, than more admired; and I may the more reasonably hope to succeed in that idea, because, though I have never been attached to his political opinions, yet, in proportion to my researches into his character as a man, he has advanced in my esteem and my affection.

I lament that the neceſsity of investigating many misrepresentations, and of correcting much asperity against him, has frequently obliged me to speak rather in the tone of an advocate, than of a common biographer; but I may say, in the words of the great Roman orator, pleading the cause of a poet infinitely leſs entitled to love and admiration, "Hunc non ego diligam? non admirer? non omni ratione defendendum putem? Atqui sic a summis hominibus, eruditiſsimisque accepimus, cæterarum rerum studia et doctrinâ, et præceptis, et arte constare; poetam naturâ ipsâ valere, et mentis viribus excitari, et quasi divino quodam spiritu afflari." If poetical powers may ever deserve to be regarded as heavenly inspiration, such undoubtedly were those of Milton, and the use, to which he applied them, was worthy of the fountain whence they flowed. He is pre-eminent in that claſs of poets, very happily described in the two following verses by the amiable Lord Falkland;

> "Who, while of Heaven the glories they recite,
> Find it within, and feel the joys they write."

It is by the epick compositions of Milton alone, that England may esteem herself as a rival to antiquity, in the highest province of literature; and it appears therefore just, that the memory of the man, to whom she is indebted for the purest, the most extensive, and permanent glory, should for ever excite her affectionate veneration.

# THE VERSE.

The measure is English heroick verse, without rhyme, as that of Homer in Greek, and of Virgil in Latin; rhyme being no necefsary adjunct or true ornament of poem, or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame metre; graced indeed since by the use of some famous modern poets, carried away by custom, but much to their own vexation, hindrance, and constraint to expref's many things otherwise, and for the most part worse, than else they would have expref'sed them. Not without cause therefore some, both Italian and Spanish poets of prime note, have rejected rhyme, both in longer and shorter works: as have also long since our best English tragedies, as a thing of itself, to all judicious ears, trivial and of no true musical delight; which consists only in apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another; not in the jingling sound of like endings, a fault avoided by the learned ancients, both in poetry and all good oratory. This neglect then of rhyme, so little is to be taken for a defect, though it may seem so perhaps to vulgar readers, that it rather is to be esteemed an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recovered to heroick poem, from the troublesome and modern bondage of rhyming.

THE

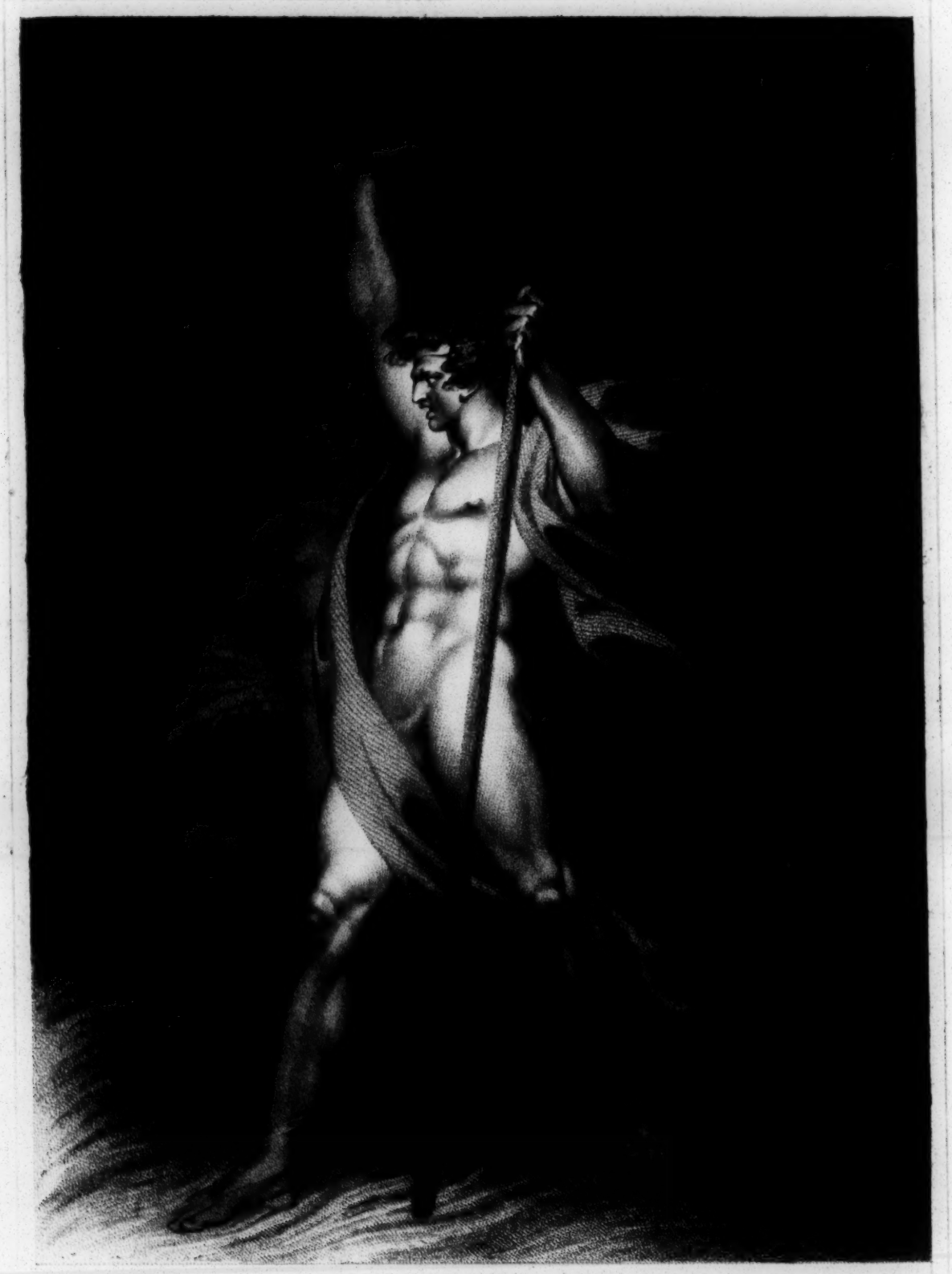
# FIRST BOOK

OF

# PARADISE LOST

## THE ARGUMENT

This first Book proposes, first, in brief, the whole subject; Man's disobedience, and the loſs thereupon of Paradise, wherein he was placed: then, touches the prime cause of his fall, the serpent, or rather Satan in the serpent; who, revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of Angels, was, by the command of God, driven out of Heaven, with all his crew, into the great deep. Which action paſsed over, the poem hastens into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his Angels, now falling into Hell, described here, not in the centre, (for Heaven and Earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed) but in a place of utter darkneſs, fitliest called Chaos. Here Satan, with his Angels, lying on the burning lake, thunder-struck and astonished, after a certain space, recovers, as from confusion; calls up him, who next in order and dignity lay by him: they confer of their miserable fall: Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then, in the same manner, confounded. They rise; their numbers, array of battle, their chief leaders named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan, and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven; but tells them, lastly, of a new world, and new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy, or report in Heaven; for that Angels were, long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many ancient fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his aſsociates thence attempt. Pandemonium, the palace of Satan, rises, suddenly built out of the deep: the infernal peers there sit in council.



R. Westall R.A. del.t

J. P. Simon sculp.t

## PARADISE LOST.

B. I. L. 315.

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# PARADISE LOST

## BOOK I

VERSE 1—20

OF Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loſs of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the bliſsful seat,
Sing, heavenly Muse, that, on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning, how the Heavens and Earth
Rose out of Chaos; or, if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook, that flow'd
Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That, with no middle flight, intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet, in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer,
Before all temples, the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for thou know'st: thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,

Dove-like, sat'st brooding on the vast abyſs,
And madest it pregnant: what in me is dark,
Illumine; what is low, raise and support;
That, to the highth of this great argument,
I may aſsert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.
Say first, for Heaven hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of hell, say first, what cause
Moved our grand parents, in that happy state,
Favour'd of Heaven so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgreſs his will,
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?
The infernal Serpent! He it was, whose guile,
Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceived
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host
Of rebel angels; by whose aid, aspiring
To set himself in glory, above his peers,
He trusted to have equall'd the Most High,
If he opposed; and, with ambitious aim,
Against the throne and monarchy of God,
Raised impious war in Heaven, and battle proud,
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong, flaming, from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomleſs perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night

To mortal men, he, with his horrid crew,
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded, though immortal: but his doom
Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happineſs, and lasting pain,
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witneſs'd huge affliction and dismay,
Mix'd with obdurate pride and steadfast hate:
At once, as far as angels ken, he views
The dismal situation, waste and wild:
A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
As one great furnace, flamed; yet, from those flames,
No light, but rather darkneſs visible,
Served only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes,
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur, unconsumed.
Such place eternal justice had prepared
For those rebellious: here their prison ordain'd
In utter darkneſs, and their portion set,
As far removed from God and light of Heaven,
As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.
O how unlike the place from whence they fell!
There, the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns, and, weltering by his side
One, next himself in power, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and named

Beëlzebub. To whom the arch-enemy,
And thence in Heaven call'd Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence, thus began.

If thou beest he; but O how fall'n! how changed
From him, who, in the happy realms of light,
Clothed with transcendent brightneſs, didst outshine
Myriads, though bright! If he, whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd
In equal ruin: into what pit, thou seest,
From what highth fall'n; so much the stronger proved
He, with his thunder: and, till then, who knew
The force of those dire arms? yet not for those,
Nor what the potent victor, in his rage,
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Though changed in outward lustre, that fix'd mind,
And high disdain from sense of injured merit,
That, with the mightiest, raised me to contend,
And, to the fierce contention, brought along
Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,
That durst dislike his reign; and me preferring,
His utmost power with adverse power opposed,
In dubious battle, on the plains of Heaven,
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
All is not lost: the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield,
And what is else, not to be overcome:
That glory never shall his wrath or might

Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace,
With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
Who, from the terrour of this arm, so late
Doubted his empire; that were low indeed;
That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall: since by fate, the strength of Gods
And this empyreal substance cannot fail,
Since, through experience of this great event,
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
We may, with more succesful hope, resolve
To wage, by force or guile, eternal war,
Irreconcileable to our grand foe;
Who now triumphs, and, in the excefs of joy,
Sole reigning, holds the tyranny of Heaven.

So spake the apostate Angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair:
And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer.

O Prince, O Chief of many throned Powers,
That led the embattled Seraphim to war
Under thy conduct; and, in dreadful deeds
Fearlefs, endanger'd Heaven's perpetual King,
And put to proof his high supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate:
Too well I see and rue the dire event,
That with sad overthrow, and foul defeat,
Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host,
In horrible destruction, laid thus low,
As far as Gods and heavenly efsences
Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,

Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
Here swallow'd up in endleſs misery.
But what if he, our conqueror, whom I now
Of force believe Almighty, since no leſs
Than such could have o'er-power'd such force as ours,
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service, as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his buſineſs be;
Here, in the heart of Hell, to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy deep:
What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment?
Whereto with speedy words the Arch-Fiend replied.
Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
To do ought good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will,
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destined aim.
But see, the angry victor hath recall'd
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit

Back to the gates of Heaven: the sulphurous hail
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown, hath laid
The fiery surge, that, from the precipice
Of Heaven, received us falling; and the thunder,
Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn,
Or satiate fury, yield it from our foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend,
From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
There rest, if any rest can harbour there;
And re-assembling our afflicted powers,
Consult, how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy; our own loss how repair;
How overcome this dire calamity;
What reinforcement we may gain from hope;
If not, what resolution from despair.
  Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides,
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood; in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian or earth-born, that warr'd on Jove;
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held; or that sea-beast

Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest, that swim the ocean stream:
Him, haply, slumbering on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff,
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind,
Moors by his side, under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays:
So stretch'd out, huge in length, the Arch-Fiend lay,
Chain'd on the burning lake; nor ever thence
Had risen or heaved his head, but that the will
And high permiſsion of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs;
That, with reiterated crimes, he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others; and enraged might see
How all his malice served but to bring forth
Infinite goodneſs, grace and mercy, shown
On Man, by him seduced; but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd.
Forthwith upright he rears, from off the pool,
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames,
Driven backward, slope their pointing spires, and roll'd
In billows, leave in the midst a horrid vale.
Then, with expanded wings, he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
That felt unusual weight, till on dry land
He lights; if it were land, that ever burn'd
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire:
And such appear'd in hue, as when the force

Of subterranean wind transports a hill,
Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible
And fuel'd entrails, thence conceiving fire,
Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds,
And leave a singed bottom, all involved
With stench and smoke. Such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him follow'd his next mate;
Both glorying to have 'scaped the Stygian flood,
As Gods, and by their own recover'd strength,
Not by the sufferance of supernal power.
Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
Said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat,
That we must change for Heaven? This mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he,
Who now is Sovereign, can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
Whom reason hath equall'd, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells. Hail, horrours; hail,
Infernal world; and thou, profoundest Hell,
Receive thy new poſſeſſor: one, who brings
A mind not to be changed by place or time:
The mind is its own place; and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be; all but leſs than he,
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here, at least
We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy; will not drive us hence:

Here, we may reign secure; and, in my choice,
To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell:
Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven.
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
The afsociates and copartners of our lofs,
Lie thus astonish'd on the oblivious pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion; or once more,
With rallied arms, to try what may be yet
Regain'd in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?
So Satan spake, and him Beëlzebub
Thus answer'd. Leader of those armies bright,
Which, but the Omnipotent, none could have foil'd,
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
Of battle, when it raged; in all afsaults
Their surest signal; they will soon resume
New courage and revive, though now they lie
Groveling and prostrate, on yon lake of fire,
As we erewhile, astounded and amazed;
No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious highth.
He scarce had ceased, when the superiour Fiend
Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, mafsy, large and round,
Behind him cast: the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optick glafs, the Tuscan artist views,
At evening, from the top of Fesolé,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,

Rivers or mountains, in her spotty globe.
His spear, to equal which the tallest pine,
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great admiral, were but a wand,
He walk'd with, to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marle: not like those steps
On Heaven's azure; and the torrid clime
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire:
Nathlefs he so endured, till on the beach
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd
His legions, angel forms, who lay intranced,
Thick as autumnal leaves, that strow the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades
High over-arch'd imbower; or scatter'd sedge
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd
Hath vex'd the Red-sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Busiris, and his Memphian chivalry;
While, with perfidious hatred, they pursued
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld,
From the safe shore, their floating carcasses,
And broken chariot wheels: so thick bestrown,
Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.
He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
Of Hell resounded. Princes, Potentates,
Warriours, the flower of Heaven, once yours, now lost,
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal spirits; or have ye chosen this place,
After the toil of battle, to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find

To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?
Or, in this abject posture have ye sworn
To adore the conqueror? who now beholds
Cherub and Seraph, rolling in the flood,
With scatter'd arms and ensigns; till anon
His swift pursuers, from Heaven gates, discern
The advantage; and descending tread us down
Thus drooping; or, with linked thunderbolts,
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.
Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n!
They heard, and were abash'd; and up they sprung
Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves, ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
Yet to their general's voice they soon obey'd,
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Waved round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
That, o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung,
Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:
So numberless were those bad Angels seen,
Hovering on wing, under the cope of Hell,
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
Till, as a signal given, the uplifted spear
Of their great sultan, waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain:

A multitude, like which the populous north
Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pafs
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
Came, like a deluge, on the south, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Lybian sands.
Forthwith from every squadron, and each band,
The heads and leaders thither haste, where stood
Their great commander: Godlike shapes, and forms
Excelling human, princely dignities,
And powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones:
Though of their names, in heavenly records now
Be no memorial; blotted out, and rased,
By their rebellion, from the books of life.
Nor had they yet, among the sons of Eve,
Got them new names; till wandering o'er the earth,
Through God's high sufferance, for the trial of man,
By falsities and lies, the greatest part
Of mankind they corrupted, to forsake
God their Creator; and the invisible
Glory of him that made them, to transform
Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd
With gay religions, full of pomp and gold,
And Devils to adore for Deities.
Then were they known to men, by various names,
And various idols, through the Heathen world.
Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
Roused from the slumber, on that fiery couch,
At their great emperor's call, as next in worth,
Came singly, where he stood on the bare strand,
While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof.

The chief were those, who, from the pit of Hell,
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
Their seats, long after next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar; Gods adored
Among the nations round; and durst abide
Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned
Between the Cherubim: yea, often placed,
Within his sanctuary itself, their shrines,
Abominations; and, with cursed things,
His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned;
And with their darknefs durst affront his light.
First Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears,
Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,
Their children's cries unheard, that pafs'd through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
Worshipp'd in Rabba and her watery plain,
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led, by fraud, to build
His temple, right against the temple of God,
On that opprobrious hill; and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom; Tophet thence
And black Gehenna call'd, the type of Hell.
Next Chemos, the obscene, dread of Moab's sons,
From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild
Of southmost Abarim: in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
The flowery dale of Sibma, clad with vines,

And Eleälé to the Asphaltick pool:
Peor his other name, when he enticed
Israel, in Sittim, on their march from Nile,
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged,
Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;
Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.
With these came they, who, from the bordering flood
Of old Euphrates, to the brook that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baälim and Ashtaroth, those male,
These feminine. For Spirits, when they please,
Can either sex assume, or both: so soft
And uncompounded is their essence pure,
Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh; but, in what shape they choose,
Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
Can execute their airy purposes,
And works of love or enmity fulfil.
For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their living strength; and unfrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial Gods; for which their heads, as low
Bow'd down in battle, sunk before the spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth, whom the Phenicians call'd
Astarte, queen of Heaven, with crescent horns:
To whose bright image nightly by the moon,

Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;
In Sion also not unsung, where stood
Her temple, on the offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,
Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound, in Lebanon, allured
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate,
In amorous ditties, all a summer's day;
While smooth Adonis, from his native rock,
Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
Infected Sion's daughters, with like heat;
Whose wanton passions, in the sacred porch,
Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,
His eye survey'd the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark
Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopt off,
In his own temple, on the groundsil edge,
Where he fell flat, and shamed his worshippers:
Dagon his name, sea monster, upward man
And downward fish: yet had his temple, high
Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,
And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
He also against the house of God was bold:

A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king,
Ahaz, his sottish conqueror, whom he drew
God's altar to disparage, and displace
For one of Syrian mode; whereon to burn
His odious offerings, and adore the Gods,
Whom he had vanquish'd. After these appear'd
A crew, who, under names of old renown,
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
With monstrous shapes and sorceries, abused
Fanatick Egypt and her priests, to seek
Their wandering Gods, disguised in brutish forms,
Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
The infection, when their borrow'd gold composed
The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
Likening his Maker to the grazed ox,
Jehovah, who, in one night, when he pafs'd
From Egypt marching, equall'd, with one stroke,
Both her first-born, and all her bleating Gods.
Belial came last, than whom a Spirit more lewd
Fell not from Heaven, or more grofs, to love
Vice for itself: to him no temple stood,
Or altar smoked; yet who more oft, than he,
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who fill'd
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends, above their loftiest towers,
And injury and outrage: and when night

Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
Witneſs the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Exposed a matron to avoid worse rape.
These were the prime in order and in might:
The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd:
The Ionian Gods, of Javan's iſsue, held
Gods, yet confeſs'd later than Heaven and Earth,
Their boasted parents: Titan, Heaven's first-born,
With his enormous brood, and birthright, seized
By younger Saturn: he, from mightier Jove,
His own and Rhea's son, like measure found.
So Jove usurping reign'd: these, first in Crete
And Ida known, thence, on the snowy top
Of cold Olympus, ruled the middle air,
Their highest Heaven; or, on the Delphian cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric land; or, who, with Saturn old,
Fled over Adria to the Hesperian fields,
And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.
All these, and more, came flocking; but with looks
Downcast and damp; yet such, wherein appear'd
Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their chief,
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
In loſs itself; which on his countenance cast
Like doubtful hue: but he, his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently raised
Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears.

Then straight commands, that, at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud, and clarions, be uprear'd
His mighty standard. That proud honour claim'd
Azazel, as his right, a Cherub tall;
Who forthwith, from the glittering staff, unfurl'd
The imperial ensign, which, full high advanced,
Shone, like a meteor, streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich emblazed,
Seraphick arms and trophies; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:
At which the universal host upsent
A shout, that tore Hell's concave; and beyond,
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment, through the gloom, were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air,
With orient colours waving: with them rose
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
Appear'd, and serried shields, in thick array,
Of depth immeasurable. Anon they move,
In perfect phalanx, to the Dorian mood
Of flutes, and soft recorders; such as raised,
To highth of noblest temper, heroes old,
Arming to battle; and, instead of rage,
Deliberate valour breathed, firm and unmoved,
With dread of death, to flight or foul retreat:
Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage,
With solemn touches, troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
Breathing united force, with fixed thought,

Moved on, in silence, to soft pipes, that charm'd
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil; and now
Advanced in view they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length, and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriours old, with order'd spear and shield,
Awaiting what command their mighty chief
Had to impose. He, through the armed files,
Darts his experienced eye; and soon traverse
The whole battalion views; their order due;
Their visages and stature, as of Gods;
Their number last he sums: and now his heart
Distends with pride, and, hardening in his strength,
Glories: for never, since created man,
Met such imbodied force, as, named with these,
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warr'd on by cranes: though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra, with the heroick race, were join'd,
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mix'd with auxiliar Gods; and what resounds
In fable, or romance, of Uther's son,
Begirt with British, and Armoric knights;
And all, who since, baptized or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont, or Montalban,
Damasco, or Morocco, or Trebisond;
Or, whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,
When Charlemain, with all his peerage, fell,
By Fontarabia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowefs, yet observed
Their dread commander. He, above the rest,
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,

Stood like a tower: His form had yet not lost
All her original brightnefs; nor appear'd
Lefs than Arch-Angel ruin'd; and the excefs
Of glory obscured; as when the sun, new risen,
Looks through the horizontal misty air,
Shorn of his beams, or, from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darken'd so, yet shone,
Above them all, the Arch-Angel; but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd; and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntlefs courage, and considerate pride,
Waiting revenge. Cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and paſsion to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,
Far other once beheld in blifs, condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain:
Millions of spirits, for his fault, amerced
Of Heaven, and from eternal splendours flung,
For his revolt: yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory wither'd: as when Heaven's fire
Hath scathed the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singed top, their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend,
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round,
With all his peers: attention held them mute.
Thrice he eſsay'd, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth. At last,

Words, interwove with sighs, found out their way.
O myriads of immortal Spirits, O Powers
Matchleſs, but with the Almighty! and that strife
Was not inglorious, though the event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change,
Hateful to utter: but what power of mind,
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge, past or present, could have fear'd,
How such united force of Gods, how such,
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
For who can yet believe, though after loſs,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to reascend,
Self-raised, and repoſseſs their native seat?
For me, be witneſs all the host of Heaven,
If counsels different, or dangers shunn'd
By me, have lost our hopes. But he, who reigns
Monarch in Heaven, till then, as one secure,
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent or custom, and his regal state,
Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own;
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war, provoked: our better part remains,
To work, in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not: that he no leſs
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife

There went a fame in Heaven that he ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation, whom his choice regard
Should favour equal to the sons of Heaven.
Thither, if but to pry, shall we, perhaps,
Our first eruption; thither or elsewhere:
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial spirits in bondage, nor the abyfs
Long under darknefs cover: but these thoughts
Full counsel must mature. Peace is despair'd,
For who can think submission? War then, war,
Open or understood, must be resolved.
He spake; and to confirm his words, out flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty cherubim. The sudden blaze
Far round illumined Hell: highly they raged
Against the Highest; and fierce, with grasped arms,
Clash'd, on their sounding shields, the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.
There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
Belch'd fire and rolling smoke: the rest entire
Shone, with a glofsy scurf, undoubted sign,
That, in his womb, was hid metallick ore,
The work of sulphur. Thither, wing'd with speed,
A numerous brigade hasten'd: as when bands
Of pioneers, with spade and pickaxe arm'd,
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on;
Mammon, the least erected spirit, that fell
From Heaven; for, e'en in Heaven, his looks and thoughts

Were always downward bent; admiring more
The riches of Heaven's pavement, trodden gold,
Than aught, divine or holy, else enjoy'd
In the vision beatifick. By him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
Ransack'd the centre; and, with impious hands,
Rifled the bowels of their mother earth
For treasures, better hid. Soon had his crew
Open'd, into the hill, a spacious wound,
And digg'd out ribs of gold. Let none admire,
That riches grow in Hell: that soil may best
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those,
Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
Learn, how their greatest monuments of fame,
And strength, and art, are easily outdone
By spirits reprobate; and in an hour,
What in an age, they, with incefsant toil,
And hands innumerable, scarce perform.
Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepared,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire,
Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude,
With wonderous art, founded the mafsy ore,
Severing each kind, and scumm'd the bullion drofs.
A third as soon had form'd, within the ground,
A various mould, and, from the boiling cells,
By strange conveyance, fill'd each hollow nook;
As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
To many a row of pipes, the sound-board breathes.
Anon, out of the earth, a fabrick huge

Rose, like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies, and voices sweet;
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave; nor did there want
Cornice or frieze, with bofsy sculptures graven:
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
Nor great Alcairo, such magnificence
Equall'd, in all their glories, to enshrine
Belus or Serapis their Gods; or seat
Their kings, when Egypt with Afsyria strove
In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile
Stood fix'd her stately highth; and straight the doors,
Opening their brazen folds, discover wide
Within, her ample spaces, o'er the smooth
And level pavement. From the arched roof,
Pendent by subtle magick, many a row
Of starry lamps, and blazing crefsets, fed
With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light,
As from a sky. The hasty multitude
Admiring enter'd; and the work some praise,
And some the architect: his hand was known
In Heaven, by many a tower'd structure high;
Where scepter'd Angels held their residence,
And sat, as princes; whom the supreme King
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright.
Nor was his name unheard, or unadored,
In ancient Greece; and, in Ausonian land,
Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell

From Heaven, they fabled, thrown by angry Jove,
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements: from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A summer's day; and with the setting sun
Dropp'd from the zenith, like a falling star,
On Lemnos, the Ægean isle. Thus they relate,
Erring; for he, with his rebellious rout,
Fell long before; nor aught avail'd him now
To have built, in Heaven, high towers: nor did he 'scape,
By all his engines; but was headlong sent,
With his industrious crew, to build in Hell.
Mean while the winged heralds, by command
Of sovereign power, with awful ceremony,
And trumpet's sound, throughout the host, proclaim
A solemn council, forthwith to be held
At Pandemonium, the high capital
Of Satan and his peers. Their summons call'd,
From every band and squared regiment,
By place or choice the worthiest. They anon,
With hundreds and with thousands trooping, came
Attended: all access was throng'd. The gates
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall,
Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold
Wont ride in arm'd, and, at the soldan's chair,
Defied the best of Panim chivalry
To mortal combat, or career with lance,
Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air,
Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
In spring time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive,

In clusters: they, among fresh dews and flowers,
Fly to and fro, or, on the smoothed plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New rubb'd with balm, expatiate, and confer
Their state affairs. So thick the airy crowd
Swarm'd, and were straiten'd; till, the signal given,
Behold a wonder! they, but now who seem'd
In bigneſs to surpaſs earth's giant sons,
Now, leſs than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room,
Throng numberleſs, like that pygmean race,
Beyond the Indian mount; or fairy elves,
Whose midnight revels, by a forest side,
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while over head the moon
Sits arbitreſs; and, nearer to the earth,
Wheels her pale course: they, on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund musick, charm his ear:
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
Reduced their shapes immense; and were at large,
Though without number, still amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And, in their own dimensions, like themselves,
The great seraphick lords and cherubim,
In close receſs, and secret conclave, sat:
A thousand demi-gods, on golden seats,
Frequent and full. After short silence then,
And summons read, the great consult began.

THE

# SECOND BOOK

OF

# PARADISE LOST

## THE ARGUMENT

The consultation begun; Satan debates, whether another battle be to be hazarded, for the recovery of Heaven: some advise it, others dissuade. A third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy, or tradition in Heaven, concerning another world, and another kind of creature, equal, or not much inferiour, to themselves, about this time to be created: their doubt, who shall be sent on this difficult search: Satan, their chief, undertakes alone the voyage; is honoured and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways, and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to Hell gates, finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them, by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between Hell and Heaven; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the power of that place, to the sight of this new world, which he sought.



R. Westall R.A. delt.

J.P. Simon sculp.t

PARADISE LOST.

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# PARADISE LOST

## BOOK II



HIGH on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or, where the gorgeous east, with richest hand,
Showers on her kings barbarick pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat; by merit raised
To that bad eminence; and, from despair,
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
Vain war with Heaven, and by succefs untaught,
His proud imaginations thus display'd.
Powers and dominions, deities of Heaven!
For since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigour, though oppreſs'd and fall'n,
I give not Heaven for lost. From this descent
Celestial virtues rising, will appear
More glorious, and more dread, than from no fall,
And trust themselves, to fear no second fate.
Me, though just right, and the fix'd laws of Heaven,
Did first create your leader, next free choice,
With what besides, in counsel or in fight,

Hath been achieved of merit; yet this loſs,
Thus far at least recover'd, hath much more
Eſtabliſh'd, in a ſafe unenvied throne,
Yielded with full conſent. The happier ſtate
In Heaven, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferiour; but who here
Will envy, whom the highest place expoſes,
Foremoſt to ſtand againſt the Thunderer's aim,
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest ſhare
Of endleſs pain? Where there is then no good
For which to ſtrive, no ſtrife can grow up there
From faction; for none, ſure, will claim in Hell
Precedence; none, whoſe portion is ſo ſmall
Of preſent pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more. With this advantage then
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in Heaven, we now return,
To claim our juſt inheritance of old;
Surer to proſper, than proſperity
Could have aſſured us; and by what beſt way,
Whether of open war, or covert guile,
We now debate: who can adviſe, may ſpeak.
He ceaſed; and next him Moloch, ſcepter'd king,
Stood up; the ſtrongeſt and the fierceſt ſpirit
That fought in Heaven, now fiercer by deſpair.
His truſt was, with the Eternal to be deem'd
Equal in ſtrength; and rather than be leſs,
Cared not to be at all; with that care loſt,
Went all his fear; of God, or Hell, or worſe,
He reck'd not: and theſe words thereafter ſpake.

My sentence is for open war: of wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now.
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait
The signal to ascend, sit lingering here,
Heaven's fugitives; and, for their dwelling place,
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
The prison of his tyranny, who reigns
By our delay? No, let us rather choose,
Arm'd with Hell flames and fury, all at once,
O'er Heaven's high towers, to force resistless way;
Turning our tortures into horrid arms,
Against the torturer; when, to meet the noise
Of his almighty engine, he shall hear
Infernal thunder; and, for lightning, see
Black fire and horrour, shot with equal rage,
Among his angels; and his throne itself
Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But perhaps
The way seems difficult and steep to scale,
With upright wing, against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them; if the sleepy drench
Of that forgetful lake benumb not still;
That, in our proper motion, we ascend
Up to our native seat: descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear,
Insulting, and pursued us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight

We sunk thus low? The ascent is easy then;
The event is fear'd; should we again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction; if there be in Hell
Fear to be worse destroy'd. What can be worse
Than to dwell here, driven out from bliſs, condemn'd,
In this abhorred deep, to utter woe;
Where, pain of unextinguishable fire
Must exercise us, without hope of end,
The vaſsals of his anger, when the scourge
Inexorable, and the torturing hour,
Calls us to penance? More destroy'd than thus,
We should be quite abolish'd, and expire.
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
His utmost ire? which to the highth enraged,
Will either quite consume us, and reduce
To nothing this eſsential; happier far
Than miserable to have eternal being;
Or, if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst
On this side nothing: and by proof we feel
Our power sufficient to disturb his Heaven,
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
Though inacceſsible, his fatal throne:
Which, if not victory, is yet revenge.
He ended frowning, and his look denounced
Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous,
To leſs than Gods. On the other side up rose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane;
A fairer person lost not Heaven; he seem'd

For dignity composed and high exploit:
But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
Dropp'd manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels; for his thoughts were low:
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful: yet he pleased the ear;
And with persuasive accent thus began.
I should be much for open war, O peers,
As not behind in hate; if what was urged,
Main reason to persuade immediate war,
Did not difsuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole succefs:
When he, who most excels in fact of arms,
In what he counsels, and in what excels,
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair,
And utter difsolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
First, what revenge? the towers of Heaven are fill'd
With armed watch, that render all accefs
Impregnable; oft on the bordering deep
Encamp their legions, or, with obscure wing,
Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise,
With blackest insurrection, to confound
Heaven's purest light, yet our great enemy,
All incorruptible, would on his throne
Sit unpolluted; and the ethereal mould,
Incapable of stain, would soon expel

Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
Victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope
Is flat despair: we must exasperate
The almighty victor, to spend all his rage;
And that must end us, that must be our cure,
To be no more. Sad cure! for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts, that wander through eternity;
To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost,
In the wide womb of uncreated night,
Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows,
Let this be good, whether our angry foe
Can give it, or will ever? how he can,
Is doubtful; that he never will, is sure.
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,
Belike through impotence, or unaware,
To give his enemies their wish, and end
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves,
To punish endless? Wherefore cease we then,
Say they who counsel war? we are decreed,
Reserved, and destined to eternal woe,
Whatever doing: What can we suffer more?
What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
What when we fled amain, pursued and struck
With Heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought
The deep to shelter us? this Hell then seem'd
A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay
Chain'd on the burning lake? that sure was worse.
What if the breath that kindled those grim fires,

Awaked, should blow them into sevenfold rage,
And plunge us in the flames? or, from above,
Should intermitted vengeance arm again
His red right hand to plague us? what if all
Her stores were open'd, and this firmament
Of Hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
Impendent horrours, threatening hideous fall,
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps,
Designing or exhorting glorious war,
Caught in a fiery tempest, shall be hurl'd,
Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey
Of wracking whirlwinds; or for ever sunk
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;
There to converse, with everlasting groans,
Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,
Ages of hopeless end? This would be worse.
War, therefore, open or conceal'd, alike
My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
Views all things at one view? He, from Heaven's highth,
All these our motions vain, sees and derides:
Not more almighty, to resist our might,
Than wise, to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
Shall we then live thus vile, the race of Heaven,
Thus trampled, thus expell'd, to suffer here
Chains and these torments? better these than worse,
By my advice; since fate inevitable
Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
The victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
Our strength is equal; nor the law unjust

That so ordains: this was at first resolved,
If we were wise, against so great a foe
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
I laugh, when those, who at the spear are bold
And vent'rous, if that fail them, shrink and fear,
What yet they know must follow, to endure
Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
The sentence of their conqueror. This is now
Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
Our supreme foe, in time, may much remit
His anger; and perhaps, thus far removed,
Not mind us, not offending, satisfied
With what is punish'd: whence, these raging fires
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
Our purer essence then will overcome
Their noxious vapour, or inured, not feel;
Or changed at length, and to the place conform'd,
In temper and in nature, will receive
Familiar the fierce heat; and void of pain,
This horrour will grow mild, this darkness light:
Besides what hope the never-ending flight
Of future days may bring, what chance, what change,
Worth waiting; since our present lot appears
For happy, though but ill; for ill, not worst;
If we procure not to ourselves more woe.
Thus Belial, with words clothed in reason's garb,
Counsell'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloth,
Not peace: and after him thus Mammon spake.
Either, to disenthrone the King of Heaven,
We war, if war be best, or to regain

Our own right lost: Him to unthrone we then
May hope, when everlasting fate shall yield
To fickle chance, and Chaos judge the strife:
The former, vain to hope, argues as vain
The latter: for what place can be for us,
Within Heaven's bound, unless Heaven's Lord supreme
We overpower? Suppose he should relent,
And publish grace to all, on promise made
Of new subjection; with what eyes could we
Stand in his presence, humble, and receive
Strict laws imposed to celebrate his throne,
With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
Forced hallelujahs; while he lordly sits,
Our envied sovereign, and his altar breathes
Ambrosial odours, and ambrosial flowers,
Our servile offerings? This must be our task
In Heaven, this our delight: how wearisome
Eternity so spent, in worship paid
To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue
By force impossible, by leave obtain'd
Unacceptable, though in Heaven, our state
Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek
Our own good from ourselves, and from our own,
Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
Free, and to none accountable; preferring
Hard liberty, before the easy yoke
Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse,
We can create; and in what place so e'er

Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain,
Through labour and endurance. This deep world
Of darkneſs do we dread? How oft, amidst
Thick clouds and dark, doth Heaven's all-ruling Sire
Choose to reside, his glory unobscured,
And with the majesty of darkneſs round
Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar,
Mustering their rage, and Heaven resembles Hell?
As he our darkneſs, cannot we his light
Imitate when we please? This desert soil
Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;
Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
Magnificence; and what can Heaven show more?
Our torments also may, in length of time,
Become our elements, these piercing fires
As soft as now severe, our temper changed
Into their temper; which must needs remove
The sensible of pain. All things invite
To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
Of order; how in safety best we may
Compose our present evils, with regard
Of what we are, and where; dismiſsing quite
All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise.
He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd
The aſsembly, as when hollow rocks retain
The sound of blustering winds, which all night long
Had roused the sea; now with hoarse cadence lull
Sea-faring men, o'erwatch'd, whose bark, by chance,
Or pinnace, anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest. Such applause was heard,

As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleased,
Advising peace: for such another field
They dreaded worse than Hell: so much the fear
Of thunder, and the sword of Michael,
Wrought still within them: and no lefs desire
To found this nether empire, which might rise
By policy, and long procefs of time,
In emulation opposite to Heaven.
Which when Beëlzebub perceived; than whom,
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave
Aspect he rose; and in his rising seem'd
A pillar of state. Deep on his front, engraven,
Deliberation sat, and public care;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestick though in ruin: sage he stood,
With Atlantean shoulders, fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies. His look
Drew audience and attention, still as night,
Or summer's noon-tide air, while thus he spake.
Thrones and imperial powers, offspring of Heaven,
Ethereal virtues; or, these titles now
Must we renounce, and changing style, be call'd
Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
A growing empire. Doubtlefs; while we dream,
And know not, that the King of Heaven hath doom'd
This place our dungeon; not our safe retreat,
Beyond his potent arm; to live exempt
From Heaven's high jurisdiction, in new league,
Banded against his throne; but to remain

In strictest bondage, though thus far removed,
Under the inevitable curb, reserved
His captive multitude. For he, be sure,
In highth or depth, still first and last will reign,
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part
By our revolt; but over Hell extend
His empire, and with iron sceptre rule
Us here, as with his golden, those in Heaven.
What sit we then projecting peace and war?
War hath determined us, and foil'd with loſs
Irreparable: terms of peace yet none
Vouchsafed or sought. For what peace will be given
To us enslaved, but custody severe,
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted? and what peace can we return?
But to our power hostility and hate,
Untamed reluctance, and revenge, though slow;
Yet ever plotting, how the conqueror least
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
In doing, what we most in suffering feel.
Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need,
With dangerous expedition, to invade
Heaven, whose high walls fear no aſsault, or siege,
Or ambush, from the deep. What if we find
Some easier enterprise? There is a place;
If ancient and prophetick fame in Heaven
Err not; another world, the happy seat
Of some new race call'd Man, about this time
To be created, like to us, though leſs
In power and excellence, but favour'd more

Of him who rules above. So was his will
Pronounced among the Gods; and by an oath,
That shook Heaven's whole circumference, confirm'd.
Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
What creatures there inhabit; of what mould,
Or substance; how endued, and what their power,
And where their weaknefs; how attempted best,
By force or subtlety. Though Heaven be shut,
And Heaven's high arbitrator sit secure,
In his own strength; this place may lie exposed,
The utmost border of his kingdom, left
To their defence who hold it: here, perhaps,
Some advantageous act may be achieved,
By sudden onset; either with Hell fire,
To waste his whole creation, or pofsefs
All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
The puny habitants; or, if not drive,
Seduce them to our party, that their God
May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works. This would surpafs
Common revenge; and interrupt his joy,
In our confusion, and our joy upraise,
In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
Hurl'd headlong, to partake with us, shall curse
Their frail original, and faded blifs,
Faded so soon. Advise, if this be worth
Attempting; or to sit in darknefs here,
Hatching vain empires. Thus Beëlzebub
Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devised
By Satan, and in part proposed. For whence,

But from the author of all ill, could spring
So deep a malice, to confound the race
Of mankind, in one root, and Earth with Hell
To mingle and involve; done all to spite
The great Creator? But their spite still serves
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleased highly those infernal states, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes: with full assent
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews.
Well have ye judged, well ended long debate,
Synod of Gods; and, like to what ye are,
Great things resolved: which, from the lowest deep,
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view
Of those bright confines, whence, with neighbouring arms,
And opportune excursion, we may chance
Re-enter Heaven; or else in some mild zone
Dwell, not unvisited of Heaven's fair light,
Secure, and at the bright'ning orient beam
Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air,
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
Shall breathe her balm. But first, whom shall we send
In search of this new world? whom shall we find
Sufficient? who shall tempt, with wandering feet,
The dark, unbottom'd, infinite abyss,
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth way; or spread his airy flight,
Upborne with indefatigable wings,
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
The happy isle? what strength, what art can then

Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
Through the strict senteries and stations thick
Of angels watching round? Here he had need
All circumspection; and we, now, no lefs
Choice in our suffrage: for on whom we send,
The weight of all, and our last hope, relies.
This said, he sat; and expectation held
His look suspense, awaiting who appear'd
To second, or oppose, or undertake
The perilous attempt: but all sat mute,
Pond'ring the danger, with deep thoughts; and each
In other's countenance read his own dismay,
Astonish'd. None, among the choice and prime
Of those Heaven-warring champions, could be found
So hardy, as to proffer or accept,
Alone, the dreadful voyage; till at last,
Satan, whom now transcendent glory raised
Above his fellows, with monarchal pride,
Conscious of highest worth, unmoved, thus spake.
O progeny of Heaven, empyreal thrones!
With reason hath deep silence and demur
Seized us, though undismay'd: long is the way
And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light:
Our prison strong, this huge convex of fire,
Outrageous to devour, immures us round
Ninefold; and gates of burning adamant,
Barr'd over us, prohibit all egrefs.
These pafs'd, if any pafs, the void profound
Of unefsential night receives him next,
Wide gaping, and with utter lofs of being

Threatens him, plunged in that abortive gulf.
If thence he 'scape, into whatever world,
Or unknown region, what remains him lefs
Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?
But I should ill become this throne, O peers,
And this imperial sovereignty, adorn'd
With splendour, arm'd with power, if aught proposed,
And judged of public moment, in the shape
Of difficulty or danger, could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I aſsume
These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
Refusing to accept as great a share
Of hazard as of honour, due alike
To him who reigns, and so much to him due
Of hazard more, as he above the rest
High honour'd sits? Go, therefore, mighty powers,
Terrour of Heaven, though fall'n; intend at home,
While here shall be our home, what best may ease
The present misery, and render Hell
More tolerable; if there be cure or charm
To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion. Intermit no watch
Against a wakeful foe, while I, abroad,
Through all the coasts of dark destruction, seek
Deliverance for us all: this enterprise
None shall partake with me. Thus saying rose
The monarch, and prevented all reply;
Prudent, lest, from his resolution raised,
Others among the chief might offer now,
Certain to be refused, what erst they fear'd;

And, so refused, might in opinion stand
His rivals; winning cheap the high repute,
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more the adventure, than his voice
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose:
Their rising, all at once, was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend,
With awful reverence prone; and as a god
Extol him, equal to the Highest in Heaven:
Nor fail'd they to expreſs, how much they praised,
That, for the general safety, he despised
His own: for neither do the spirits damn'd
Lose all their virtue, lest bad men should boast
Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,
Or close ambition varnish'd o'er with zeal.
Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
Ended, rejoicing in their matchleſs chief:
As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds
Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread
Heaven's cheerful face, the lowering element
Scowls o'er the darken'd landscape, snow, or shower:
If chance the radiant sun, with farewell sweet,
Extends his evening beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
O shame to men! devil with devil damn'd
Firm concord holds; men only disagree
Of creatures rational; though under hope
Of heavenly grace, and God proclaiming peace;
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife,

Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:
As if, which might induce us to accord,
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
That day and night for his destruction wait.
The Stygian council thus dissolved; and forth
In order came the grand infernal peers:
'Midst came their mighty paramount, and seem'd
Alone the antagonist of Heaven; nor less
Than Hell's dread emperour, with pomp supreme,
And god-like imitated state: him round
A globe of fiery seraphim enclosed,
With bright emblazonry, and horrent arms.
Then of their session ended they bid cry,
With trumpets' regal sound, the great result.
Towards the four winds, four speedy cherubim
Put to their mouths the sounding alchymy,
By heralds' voice explain'd: the hollow abyss
Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell,
With deaf'ning shout, return'd them loud acclaim.
Thence, more at ease their minds, and somewhat raised
By false presumptuous hope, the ranged powers
Disband; and wandering each his several way,
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
Leads him, perplex'd, where he may likeliest find
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
The irksome hours, till his great chief return.
Part on the plain, or in the air sublime
Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,
As at the Olympian games or Pythian fields:

Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form:
As when, to warn proud cities, war appears
Waged in the troubled sky, and armies rush
To battle in the clouds: before each van
Prick forth the airy knights, and couch their spears,
Till thickest legions close: with feats of arms,
From either end of Heaven, the welkin burns.
Others, with vast Typhœan rage more fell,
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air
In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar:
As when Alcides, from Oechalia crown'd
With conquest, felt the envenom'd robe, and tore,
Through pain, up by the roots, Thessalian pines;
And Lichas, from the top of Oeta, threw
Into the Euboic sea. Others more mild,
Retreated in a silent valley; sing,
With notes angelical, to many a harp,
Their own heroick deeds, and hapless fall
By doom of battle; and complain, that fate
Free virtue should inthrall to force or chance.
Their song was partial; but the harmony,
What could it less when spirits immortal sing?
Suspended Hell; and took with ravishment
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet,
For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense,
Others apart sat, on a hill retired,
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate;
Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute;

And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost:
Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happineſs, and final misery,
Paſsion and apathy, and glory, and shame;
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy:
Yet, with a pleasing sorcery, could charm
Pain for a while, or anguish, and excite
Fallacious hope; or arm the obdured breast
With stubborn patience, as with triple steel.
Another part, in squadrons and groſs bands,
On bold adventure, to discover wide
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
Might yield them easier habitation, bend
Four ways their flying march, along the banks
Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge
Into the burning lake, their baleful streams:
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
Sad Acheron, of sorrow black and deep;
Cocytus, named of lamentation loud,
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon,
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her watery labyrinth; whereof who drinks,
Forthwith his former state and being forgets;
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Beyond this flood, a frozen continent
Lies, dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
Thaws not; but gathers heap, and ruin seems

Of ancient pile: all else deep snow and ice,
A gulf profound, as that Serbonian bog,
Betwixt Damiata and mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
Burns frore, and cold performs the effect of fire.
Thither, by harpy-footed furies haled,
At certain revolutions, all the damn'd
Are brought; and feel, by turns, the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce;
From beds of raging fire, to starve in ice
Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
Immoveable, infix'd, and frozen round,
Periods of time; thence hurried back to fire.
They ferry over this Lethean sound,
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment;
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose,
In sweet forgetfulness, all pain and woe,
All in one moment, and so near the brink:
But fate withstands; and to oppose the attempt,
Medusa, with gorgonian terrour, guards
The ford; and of itself, the water flies
All taste of living wight, as once it fled
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on,
In confused march forlorn, the advent'rous bands,
With shuddering horrour pale, and eyes aghast,
View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest. Through many a dark and dreary vale
They pass'd, and many a region dolorous;
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp,

Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death;
A universe of death, which God by curse
Created evil, for evil only good:
Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, unutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceived,
Gorgons, and hydras, and chimeras dire.

Mean while the adversary of God and man,
Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest design,
Puts on swift wings, and towards the gates of Hell
Explores his solitary flight. Sometimes
He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left;
Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
Up to the fiery concave, towering high:
As when, far off at sea, a fleet descry'd
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds,
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs: they, on the trading flood,
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
Ply, stemming nightly toward the Pole: So seem'd
Far off the flying fiend. At last appear
Hell bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,
And thrice threefold the gates; three folds were brass,
Three iron, three of adamantine rock,
Impenetrable, empaled with circling fire,
Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat,
On either side, a formidable shape;
The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair,

But ended foul, in many a scaly fold,
Voluminous and vast, a serpent arm'd
With mortal sting: about her middle round
A cry of hell-hounds never ceasing bark'd,
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,
If aught disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there; yet there still bark'd and howl'd
Within, unseen. Far lefs abhorr'd than these
Vex'd Scylla, bathing in the sea, that parts
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:
Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when call'd
In secret, riding through the air she comes,
Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland witches; while the labouring moon
Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,
If shape it might be call'd, that shape had none
Distinguishable, in member, joint, or limb;
Or substance might be call'd, that shadow seem'd;
For each seem'd either: black it stood as night,
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful dart: what seem'd his head,
The likenefs of a kingly crown had on.
Satan was now at hand; and from his seat
The monster, moving onward, came as fast,
With horrid strides; Hell trembled as he strode.
The undaunted fiend, what this might be, admired;
Admired, not fear'd: God and his Son except,
Created thing naught valued he, nor shunn'd;
And, with disdainful look, thus first began.

Whence, and what art thou, execrable shape,
That darest, though grim and terrible, advance
Thy miscreated front athwart my way
To yonder gates? Through them I mean to pass,
That be assured, without leave ask'd of thee.
Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
Hell-born, not to contend with spirits of Heaven.
To whom the goblin, full of wrath, replied.
Art thou that traitor angel, art thou he,
Who first broke peace in Heaven, and faith, till then
Unbroken, and, in proud rebellious arms,
Drew after him the third part of Heaven's sons,
Conjured against the Highest; for which both thou
And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd,
To waste eternal days in woe and pain?
And reckon'st thou thyself with spirits of Heaven,
Hell-doom'd, and breathest defiance here and scorn,
Where I reign king, and, to enrage thee more,
Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,
False fugitive; and to thy speed add wings,
Lest, with a whip of scorpions, I pursue
Thy lingering; or, with one stroke of this dart,
Strange horrour seize thee, and pangs unfelt before.
So spake the grisly terrour; and in shape,
So speaking, and so threatening, grew tenfold
More dreadful and deform. On the other side,
Incensed with indignation, Satan stood
Unterrified; and like a comet burn'd,
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge,
In the arctick sky, and from his horrid hair

Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
Levell'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands
No second stroke intend; and such a frown
Each cast at the other, as when two black clouds,
With Heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caspian; then stand front to front,
Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow,
To join their dark encounter in mid air:
So frown'd the mighty combatants, that Hell
Grew darker at their frown; so match'd they stood:
For never but once more was either like
To meet so great a foe: and now great deeds
Had been achieved, whereof all Hell had rung,
Had not the snaky sorceress, that sat
Fast by Hell gate, and kept the fatal key,
Risen, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.
O father, what intends thy hand, she cry'd,
Against thy only son? What fury, O son,
Possesses thee, to bend that mortal dart
Against thy father's head? and know'st for whom?
For him, who sits above, and laughs the while
At thee, ordain'd his drudge, to execute
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;
His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.
She spake; and at her words the hellish pest
Forbore: then these to her Satan return'd.
So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand,
Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds,
What it intends; till first I know of thee,

What thing thou art, thus double-form'd; and why,
In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st
Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son:
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable, than him and thee.
To whom, thus the porteresfs of Hell gate replied.
Hast thou forgot me then? and do I seem
Now in thine eye so foul? once deem'd so fair
In Heaven, when at the afsembly, and in sight
Of all the seraphim, with thee combined,
In bold conspiracy against Heaven's King,
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surprised thee; dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
In darknefs, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth, till on the left side, opening wide,
Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,
Then shining heavenly fair, a goddefs arm'd,
Out of thy head I sprung. Amazement seized
All the host of Heaven; back they recoil'd, afraid
At first, and call'd me Sin: and for a sign
Portentous held me: but familiar grown,
I pleased, and with attractive graces won
The most averse; thee chiefly, who full oft,
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing,
Becamest enamour'd; and such joy thou took'st
With me in secret, that my womb conceived
A growing burden. Mean while war arose,
And fields were fought in Heaven; wherein remain'd,
For what could else? to our almighty foe
Clear victory; to our part lofs and rout,

Through all the empyrean: down they fell,
Driven headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down
Into this deep; and in the general fall
I also: at which time this powerful key
Into my hand was given, with charge to keep
These gates for ever shut; which none can pafs,
Without my opening. Pensive here I sat,
Alone; but long I sat not, till my womb
Pregnant by thee, and now excefsive grown,
Prodigious motion felt, and rueful throes.
At last this odious offspring, whom thou seest,
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way,
Tore through my entrails; that with fear and pain
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
Transform'd: but he, my inbred enemy,
Forth ifsued, brandishing his fatal dart,
Made to destroy. I fled, and cried out, Death!
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
From all her caves, and back resounded, Death!
I fled; but he pursued, though more, it seems,
Inflamed with lust than rage, and swifter far,
Me overtook, his mother, all dismay'd:
And, in embraces forcible and foul,
Engendering with me, of that rape begot
These yelling monsters, that with ceaselefs cry
Surround me, as thou saw'st; hourly conceived,
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
To me: for when they list, into the womb
That bred them they return; and howl and gnaw
My bowels, their repast: then bursting forth

Afresh, with conscious terrours vex me round,
That rest or intermiſsion none I find.
Before mine eyes, in opposition sits
Grim Death, my son and foe, who sets them on;
And me, his parent, would full soon devour,
For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involved; and knows, that I
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
Whenever that shall be: so fate pronounced.
But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, shun
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
To be invulnerable, in those bright arms,
Though temper'd heavenly: for that mortal dint,
Save he who reigns above, none can resist.
She finish'd, and the subtle fiend his lore
Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth.
Dear daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy sire,
And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge
Of dalliance had with thee in Heaven, and joys
Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change
Befallen us unforeseen, unthought of; know,
I come no enemy, but to set free,
From out this dark and dismal house of pain,
Both him and thee; and all the heavenly host
Of spirits, that, in our just pretences arm'd,
Fell with us from on high: from them I go
This uncouth errand, sole, and, one for all,
Myself expose; with lonely steps to tread
The unfounded deep, and through the void immense
To search, with wandering quest, a place foretold

Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
Created, vast and round, a place of blifs,
In the purlieus of Heaven; and therein placed
A race of upstart creatures, to supply
Perhaps our vacant room, though more removed;
Lest Heaven, surcharged with potent multitude,
Might hap to move new broils. Be this, or aught
Than this more secret, now design'd, I haste
To know; and this once known, shall soon return,
And bring ye to the place, where thou and Death
Shall dwell at ease; and up and down unseen,
Wing silently the buxom air, embalm'd
With odours; there ye shall be fed and fill'd
Immeasurably: all things shall be your prey.
He ceased; for both seem'd highly pleased, and Death
Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
His famine should be fill'd; and blefs'd his maw,
Destined to that good hour: no lefs rejoiced
His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire.
The key of this infernal pit by due,
And by command of Heaven's all-powerful King,
I keep; by him forbidden to unlock
These adamantine gates: against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearlefs to be o'ermatch'd by living might.
But what owe I to his commands above,
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down,
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound;
To sit in hateful office here confined,
Inhabitant of Heaven, and heavenly-born,

Here, in perpetual agony and pain,
With terrours and with clamours compaſs'd round,
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
My being gavest me; whom should I obey
But thee? whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliſs, among
The gods, who live at ease; where I shall reign
At thy right hand, voluptuous, as beseems
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end.
Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
And towards the gate rolling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up drew;
Which, but herself, not all the Stygian powers
Could once have moved; then in the key-hole turns
The intricate wards, and every bolt and bar,
Of maſsy iron or solid rock, with ease
Unfastens. On a sudden open fly,
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
The infernal doors; and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She open'd; but to shut
Excell'd her power: the gates wide open stood,
That, with extended wings, a banner'd host,
Under spread ensigns marching, might paſs through,
With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;
So wide they stood; and, like a furnace mouth,
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
Before their eyes, in sudden view appear,

The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension; where length, breadth, and highth,
And time, and place, are lost; where eldest Night
And Chaos, ancestors of nature, hold
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endleſs wars; and by confusion stand.
For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,
Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring
Their embryon atoms: they around the flag
Of each his faction, in their several clans,
Light arm'd, or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,
Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the sands
Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,
Levied to side with warring winds, and poize
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
He rules a moment: Chaos umpire sits,
And by decision more embroils the fray,
By which he reigns: next him, high arbiter,
Chance governs all. Into this wild abyſs,
The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave,
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
But all these, in their pregnant causes, mix'd
Confusedly; and which thus must ever fight,
Unleſs the almighty Maker them ordain,
His dark materials, to create more worlds;
Into this wild abyſs, the wary fiend
Stood on the brink of Hell, and look'd a while,
Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith
He had to croſs. Nor was his ear leſs peal'd

With noises loud and ruinous, to compare
Great things with small, than when Bellona storms,
With all her battering engines, bent to rase
Some capital city; or lefs, than if this frame
Of Heaven were falling, and these elements,
In mutiny, had from her axle torn
The steadfast earth. At last, his sail-broad vans
He spreads for flight, and, in the surging smoke
Uplifted, spurns the ground; thence many a league,
As in a cloudy chair ascending, rides
Audacious: but that seat soon failing, meets
A vast vacuity. All unawares,
Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb down he drops
Ten thousand fathom deep; and to this hour
Down had been falling, had not, by ill chance,
The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
As many miles aloft: that fury stay'd,
Quench'd in a boggy syrtis, neither sea,
Nor good dry land; nigh founder'd, on he fares,
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.
As when a griffon, through the wilderneſs,
With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,
Pursues the Arimaspian, who by stealth
Had, from his wakeful custody, purloin'd
The guarded gold: so eagerly the fiend,
O'er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way;
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies.

At length, a universal hubbub wild
Of stunning sounds, and voices all confused,
Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
With loudest vehemence: Thither he plies,
Undaunted, to meet there, whatever power
Or spirit, of the nethermost abyss,
Might in that noise reside; of whom to ask,
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies,
Bordering on light: when straight behold the throne
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion, spread
Wide on the wasteful deep: with him enthroned,
Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
The consort of his reign: and by them stood
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
Of Demogorgon; Rumour next, and Chance,
And Tumult, and Confusion, all embroil'd;
And Discord, with a thousand various mouths.
To whom Satan, turning boldly, thus. Ye powers
And spirits of this nethermost abyss,
Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy,
With purpose to explore, or to disturb,
The secrets of your realm; but by constraint,
Wandering this darksome desert, as my way
Lies, through your spacious empire, up to light;
Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek
What readiest path leads, where your gloomy bounds
Confine with Heaven; or if some other place,
From your dominion won, the ethereal King
Possesses lately, thither to arrive,
I travel this profound: direct my course:

Directed, no mean recompense it brings
To your behoof; if I that region lost,
All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce
To her original darkneſs, and your sway,
Which is my present journey, and once more
Erect the standard there of ancient Night;
Yours be the advantage all, mine the revenge.
  Thus Satan: and him, thus the anarch old,
With faltering speech, and visage incomposed,
Answer'd. I know thee, stranger, who thou art;
That mighty leading angel, who of late
Made head against Heaven's King, though overthrown.
I saw, and heard: for such a numerous host
Fled not in silence, through the frighted deep,
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
Confusion worse confounded: and Heaven gates
Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands,
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
Keep residence; if all I can will serve
That little, which is left, so to defend;
Encroach'd on still, through your intestine broils,
Weakening the sceptre of old Night: first Hell,
Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;
Now lately Heaven and Earth, another world,
Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain
To that side Heaven, from whence your legions fell.
If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger: go, and speed:
Havock, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain.
  He ceased; and Satan staid not to reply:

But glad, that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity and force renew'd,
Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,
Into the wild expanse; and, through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round
Environ'd, wins his way: harder beset,
And more endanger'd, than when Argo pafs'd
Through Bosporus, betwixt the justling rocks:
Or when Ulyfses, on the larboard, shunn'd
Charybdis, and by the other whirlpool steer'd:
So he, with difficulty and labour hard,
Moved on; with difficulty and labour he.
But he once pafs'd, soon after, when man fell,
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain,
Following his track, such was the will of Heaven,
Paved after him a broad and beaten way,
Over the dark abyfs; whose boiling gulf
Tamely endured a bridge, of wonderous length,
From Hell continued, reaching the utmost orb
Of this frail world: by which the spirits perverse,
With easy intercourse, pafs to and fro,
To tempt or punish mortals; except whom,
God and good angels guard, by special grace.
But now, at last, the sacred influence
Of light appears; and from the walls of Heaven
Shoots far, into the bosom of dim Night,
A glimmering dawn. Here Nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire;
As from her outmost works, a broken foe,
With tumult lefs, and with lefs hostile din;

That Satan, with leſs toil, and now with ease,
Wafts on the calmer wave, by dubious light,
And, like a weather-beaten veſsel, holds
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn:
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
Far off the empyreal Heaven, extended wide
In circuit, undetermined, square or round;
With opal towers, and battlements adorn'd,
Of living sapphire, once his native seat:
And fast by, hanging in a golden chain,
This pendent world, in bigneſs as a star
Of smallest magnitude, close by the moon.
Thither, full fraught with mischievous revenge,
Accursed, and in a cursed hour, he hies.

THE

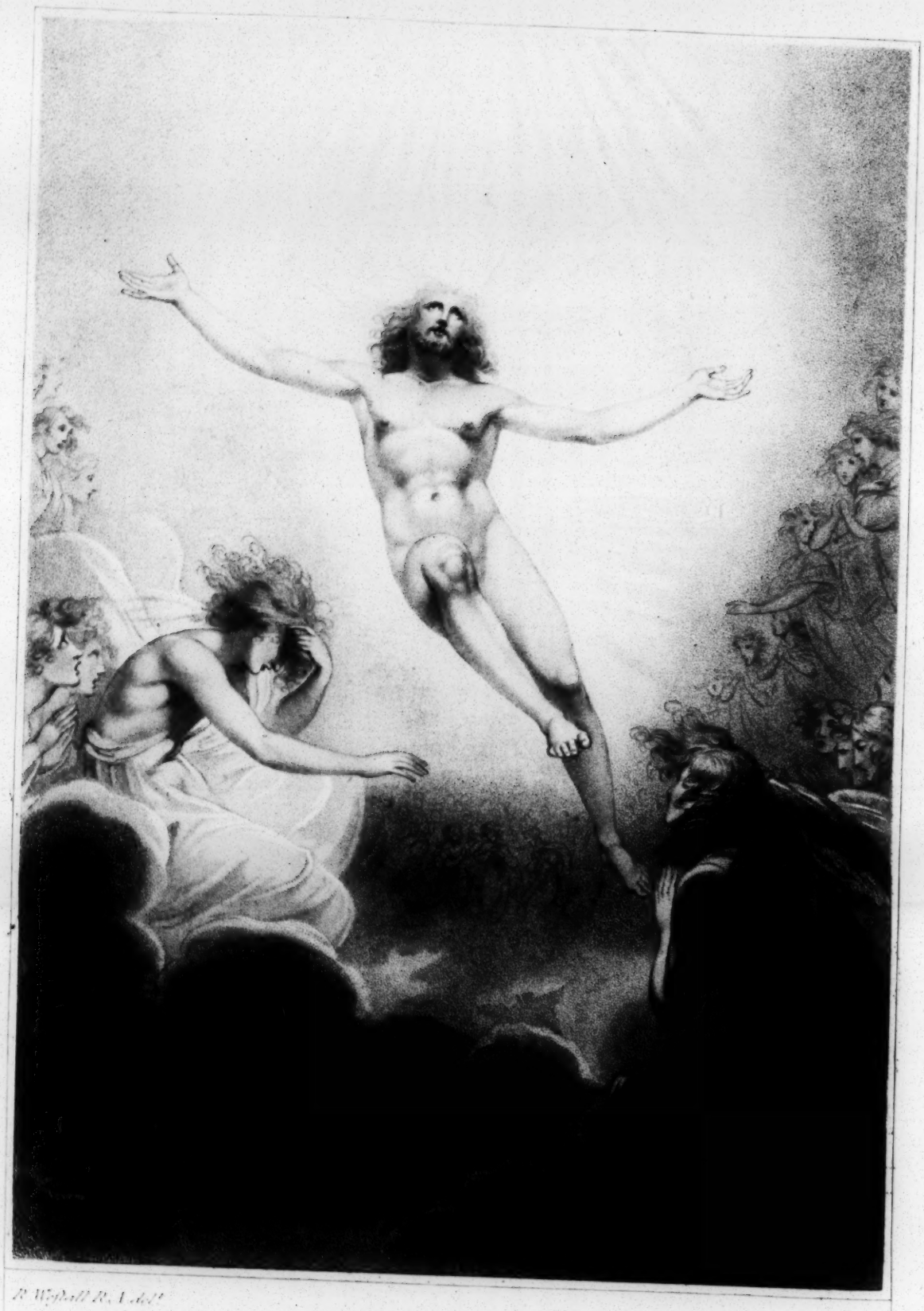
# THIRD BOOK

OF

# PARADISE LOST

## THE ARGUMENT

God sitting on his throne, sees Satan flying towards this world, then newly created; shows him to the Son, who sat at his right hand; foretells the succeſs of Satan in perverting Mankind; clears his own justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created Man free, and able enough to have withstood his tempter; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduced. The Son of God renders praises to his Father, for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards Man; but God again declares, that grace cannot be extended towards Man, without the satisfaction of divine justice: Man hath offended the majesty of God, by aspiring to Godhead; and therefore, with all his progeny, devoted to death, must die, unleſs some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransome for Man: the Father accepts him; ordains his incarnation; pronounces his exaltation above all names in Heaven and Earth; commands all the angels to adore him; they obey, and hymning to their harps, in full quire, celebrate the Father and the Son. Mean while, Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb; where wandering, he first finds a place, since called the Limbo of Vanity; what persons and things fly up thither: thence comes to the gate of Heaven, described ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it: his paſsage thence to the orb of the sun: he finds there Uriel, the regent of that orb; but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner angel; and pretending a zealous desire to behold the new creation, and Man, whom God had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed; alights first on mount Niphates.



R. Westall R.A. del.t

A.P. Simon, Sculp.t

PARADISE LOST.

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# PARADISE LOST

## BOOK III

VERSE 1—20

Hail, holy Light, offspring of Heaven first-born:
Or, of the Eternal coeternal beam,
May I expreſs thee unblamed? since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright eſsence increate.
Or hear'st thou rather, pure ethereal stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? before the sun,
Before the Heavens thou wert; and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
The rising world of waters, dark and deep,
Won from the void and formleſs infinite.
Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
Escaped the Stygian pool; though long detain'd
In that obscure sojourn; while, in my flight,
Through utter and through middle darkneſs borne,
With other notes, than to the Orphean lyre,
I sung of Chaos and eternal Night:
Taught, by the heavenly Muse, to venture down
The dark descent, and up to reascend.

Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,
And feel thy sovereign vital lamp; but thou
Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain,
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,
Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
Cease I to wander, where the muses haunt,
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Smit with the love of sacred song: but chief
Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath,
That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit. Nor, sometimes, forget
Those other two, equall'd with me in fate,
So were I equall'd with them in renown,
Blind Thamyris, and blind Mæonides,
And Tiresias, and Phineus, prophets old:
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling, and, in shadiest covert hid,
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
Seasons return; but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine:
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off; and, for the book of knowledge fair,
Presented with a universal blank
Of nature's works, to me expunged and rased:
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.

So much the rather thou, celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate; there plant eyes; all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see, and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.
    Now had the almighty Father from above,
From the pure empyrean, where he sits
High throned, above all highth, bent down his eye,
His own works, and their works, at once to view.
About him all the sanctities of Heaven
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight received
Beatitude past utterance: on his right
The radiant image of his glory sat,
His only Son. On earth he first beheld
Our two first parents, yet the only two
Of mankind, in the happy garden placed,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love;
Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,
In blifsful solitude. He then survey'd
Hell, and the gulf between, and Satan there,
Coasting the wall of Heaven, on this side Night,
In the dun air sublime; and ready now
To stoop, with wearied wings, and willing feet,
On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd
Firm land imbosom'd, without firmament,
Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
Him God beholding, from his prospect high,
Wherein past, present, future, he beholds;
Thus to his only Son, foreseeing, spake.
    Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage

Transports our adversary? whom no bounds
Prescribed, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains
Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyſs,
Wide interrupt, can hold; so bent he seems
On desperate revenge, that shall redound
Upon his own rebellious head. And now,
Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way,
Not far off Heaven, in the precincts of light,
Directly towards the new created world,
And man there placed; with purpose to eſsay,
If him by force he can destroy, or worse,
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert:
For man will hearken to his glozing lies,
And easily transgreſs the sole command,
Sole pledge of his obedience; so will fall,
He and his faithleſs progeny. Whose fault?
Whose, but his own? Ingrate! he had of me,
All he could have: I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
Such I created all the ethereal powers
And spirits, both them who stood, and them who fail'd;
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,
Where only what they needs must do appear'd,
Not what they would? what praise could they receive?
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
When will and reason, (reason also is choice),
Uſeleſs and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
Made paſsive both, had serv'd neceſsity,

Not me? They, therefore, as to right belong'd,
So were created; nor can justly accuse
Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
As if predestination over-ruled
Their will, disposed by absolute decree,
Or high foreknowledge. They themselves decreed
Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no lefs proved certain, unforeknown.
So, without least impulse, or shadow of fate,
Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
They trespafs; authors to themselves in all,
Both what they judge, and what they choose; for so
I form'd them free, and free they must remain,
Till they inthrall themselves: I else must change
Their nature, and revoke the high decree,
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
Their freedom: they themselves ordain'd their fall.
The first sort, by their own suggestion fell,
Self-tempted, self-depraved: man falls, deceived
By the other first; man therefore shall find grace,
The other none: in mercy and justice both,
Through Heaven and Earth, so shall my glory excel;
But mercy first and last shall brightest shine.
Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd
All Heaven; and, in the blefsed spirits elect,
Sense of new joy ineffable diffused.
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious; in him all his Father shone,
Substantially expref's'd; and in his face

Divine compafsion visibly appear'd,
Love without end, and without measure grace;
Which uttering, thus he to his Father spake.
O Father, gracious was that word, which closed
Thy sovereign sentence, that man should find grace;
For which, both Heaven and Earth shall high extol
Thy praises, with the innumerable sound
Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne,
Encompafs'd, shall resound thee ever blefs'd.
For should man finally be lost? should man,
Thy creature late so loved, thy youngest son,
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd
With his own folly? that be from thee far,
That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
Of all things made, and judgest only right.
Or, shall the adversary thus obtain
His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil
His malice, and thy goodnefs bring to naught?
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to Hell
Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
By him corrupted? or, wilt thou thyself
Abolish thy creation, and unmake
For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?
So should thy goodnefs, and thy greatnefs, both
Be question'd, and blasphemed, without defence.
To whom the great Creator thus replied.
O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
Son of my bosom, Son, who art alone
My word, my wisdom, and effectual might;

All hast thou spoken, as my thoughts are: all
As my eternal purpose hath decreed:
Man shall not quite be lost, but saved who will;
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me,
Freely vouchsafed. Once more I will renew
His lapsed powers, though forfeit and inthrall'd
By sin, to foul exorbitant desires:
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand,
On even ground, against his mortal foe,
By me upheld, that he may know how frail
His fall'n condition is, and to me owe
All his deliverance, and to none but me.
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,
Elect above the rest; so is my will:
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd
Their sinful state; and to appease betimes
The incensed Deity, while offer'd grace
Invites: for I will clear their senses dark,
What may suffice, and soften stony hearts,
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.
To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,
Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
And I will place within them, as a guide,
My umpire, Conscience; whom if they will hear,
Light after light, well used, they shall attain;
And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
This, my long sufferance, and my day of grace,
They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;
But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more,

That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;
And none but such from mercy I exclude.
But yet all is not done: man disobeying,
Disloyal, breaks his fealty, and sins
Against the high supremacy of Heaven,
Affecting God-head, and so losing all,
To expiate his treason hath naught left,
But to destruction, sacred and devote,
He, with his whole posterity, must die;
Die, he or justice must: unleſs for him,
Some other, able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
Say, heavenly powers, where shall we find such love?
Which of ye will be mortal, to redeem
Man's mortal crime, and just, the unjust to save?
Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?
He ask'd; but all the heavenly quire stood mute,
And silence was in Heaven: on man's behalf,
Patron or interceſsor, none appear'd;
Much leſs that durst upon his own head draw
The deadly forfeiture, and ransome set.
And now, without redemption, all mankind
Must have been lost, adjudged to death and Hell,
By doom severe; had not the Son of God,
In whom the fulneſs dwells of love divine,
His dearest mediation thus renew'd.
Father, thy word is paſs'd, man shall find grace;
And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
The speediest of thy winged meſsengers,
To visit all thy creatures, and to all

Comes unprevented, unimplored, unsought?
Happy for man, so coming; he her aid
Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost:
Atonement for himself, or offering meet,
Indebted and undone, hath none to bring:
Behold me then; me for him, life for life
I offer; on me let thine anger fall:
Account me man; I, for his sake, will leave
Thy bosom, and this glory, next to thee,
Freely put off, and for him lastly die,
Well pleased. On me let Death wreak all his rage;
Under his gloomy power, I shall not long
Lie vanquish'd; thou hast given me to poſsefs
Life in myself for ever; by thee I live,
Though now to Death I yield, and am his due,
All that of me can die: yet that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave,
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul,
For ever with corruption, there to dwell.
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue
My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil:
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
I, through the ample air, in triumph high,
Shall lead Hell captive, maugre Hell, and show
The powers of darkneſs bound. Thou at the sight
Pleased, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile;
While, by thee raised, I ruin all my foes,
Death last, and with his carcaſs glut the grave:
Then, with the multitude of my redeem'd,

Shall enter Heaven, long absent, and return,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assured,
And reconcilement: wrath shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire.
His words here ended; but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love
To mortal men; above which only shone
Filial obedience. As a sacrifice
Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will
Of his great Father. Admiration seized
All Heaven; what this might mean, and whither tend,
Wondering: but soon the Almighty thus replied.
O thou, in Heaven and Earth the only peace
Found out for mankind, under wrath! O thou,
My sole complacence! well thou know'st, how dear
To me are all my works, nor man the least,
Though last created; that for him I spare
Thee, from my bosom and right hand, to save,
By losing thee awhile, the whole race lost.
Thou, therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
Their nature also to thy nature join;
And be thyself man, among men on earth,
Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,
By wonderous birth. Be thou, in Adam's room,
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
As in him perish all men, so in thee,
As from a second root, shall be restored
As many as are restored; without thee none.
His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit

Imputed shall absolve them, who renounce
Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. So man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for man, be judged and die;
And dying rise, and rising, with him raise
His brethren, ransomed with his own dear life.
So heavenly love shall outdo hellish hate,
Giving to death, and dying to redeem;
So dearly to redeem, what hellish hate
So easily destroy'd, and still destroys
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
Because thou hast, though throned in highest bliss,
Equal to God, and equally enjoying
God-like fruition, quitted all, to save
A world from utter loss, and hast been found,
By merit more than birthright, Son of God;
Found worthiest to be so, by being good,
Far more than great or high: because in thee,
Love hath abounded more than glory abounds.
Therefore, thy humiliation shall exalt
With thee thy manhood, also to this throne:
Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign,
Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
Anointed universal King. All power
I give thee; reign for ever, and assume
Thy merits: under thee, as head supreme,
Thrones, princedoms, powers, dominions, I reduce:

All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
In Heaven, or Earth, or under Earth in Hell.
When thou, attended gloriously, from Heaven,
Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
The summoning arch-angels, to proclaim
Thy dread tribunal; forthwith, from all winds,
The living, and forthwith, the cited dead
Of all past ages, to the general doom,
Shall hasten; such a peal shall rouse their sleep.
Then all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge
Bad men and angels; they arraign'd shall sink
Beneath thy sentence: Hell, her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean while
The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New Heaven and Earth; wherein the just shall dwell,
And, after all their tribulations long,
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.
Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,
For regal sceptre then no more shall need,
God shall be all in all. But all ye gods,
Adore him, who to compass all this dies;
Adore the Son, and honour him as me.
No sooner had the Almighty ceased, but all
The multitude of angels, with a shout,
Loud, as from numbers without number, sweet,
As from blest'd voices, uttering joy; Heaven rung
With jubilee, and loud hosannas fill'd
The eternal regions: lowly reverent,
Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground,

With solemn adoration, down they cast
Their crowns, inwove with amaranth and gold;
Immortal amaranth, a flower, which once
In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,
Began to bloom; but soon, for man's offence,
To Heaven removed, where first it grew; there grows,
And flowers aloft, shading the fount of life,
And where the river of bliſs, through midst of Heaven,
Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream:
With these, that never fade, the spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks, inwreathed with beams.
Now in loose garlands, thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
Empurpled with celestial roses, smiled.
Then crown'd again, their golden harps they took,
Harps ever tuned, that, glittering by their side,
Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
Of charming symphony, they introduce
Their sacred song, and waken raptures high:
No voice exempt, no voice but well could join
Melodious part; such concord is in Heaven.
Thee, Father, first they sung, omnipotent,
Immutable, immortal, infinite,
Eternal King; thee, Author of all being,
Fountain of light, thyself invisible,
Amidst the glorious brightneſs, where thou sit'st
Throned inacceſsible; but when thou shadest
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee, like a radiant shrine,
Dark with exceſsive bright, thy skirts appear;

Yet dazzle Heaven, that brightest seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
Thee next they sang, of all creation first,
Begotten Son, divine similitude;
In whose conspicuous countenance, without cloud
Made visible, the Almighty Father shines,
Whom else, no creature can behold: on thee
Impreſs'd, the effulgence of his glory abides;
Transfused on thee, his ample Spirit rests.
He Heaven of Heavens, and all the powers therein,
By thee created, and by thee, threw down
The aspiring dominations: thou, that day,
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming chariot wheels, that shook
Heaven's everlasting frame; while o'er the necks
Thou drovest of warring angels disarray'd.
Back from pursuit, thy powers, with loud acclaim,
Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes;
Not so on man: him, through their malice fall'n,
Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
So strictly, but much more to pity incline.
No sooner did thy dear and only Son
Perceive thee purposed, not to doom frail man
So strictly, but much more to pity inclined,
He, to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of mercy and justice, in thy face discern'd,
Regardleſs of the bliſs, wherein he sat,
Second to thee, offer'd himself to die,
For man's offence. O unexampled love,

Love no where to be found, lefs than divine!
Hail, Son of God! Saviour of men! thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my song,
Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.
Thus, they in Heaven, above the starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
Mean while, upon the firm opacous globe
Of this round world, whose first convex divides
The luminous inferiour orbs, enclosed
From Chaos, and the inroad of Darknefs old,
Satan alighted walks. A globe far off
It seem'd, now seems a boundlefs continent,
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night,
Starlefs exposed, and ever-threatening storms
Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky;
Save on that side, which from the wall of Heaven,
Though distant far, some small reflection gains
Of glimmering air, lefs vex'd with tempest loud:
Here walk'd the fiend at large, in spacious field.
As when a vulture, on Imaus bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey,
To gorge the flesh of lambs, or yeanling kids,
On hills, where flocks are fed, flies toward the springs
Of Ganges, or Hydaspes, Indian streams;
But in his way, lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive,
With sails and wind, their cany waggons light:
So, on this windy sea of land, the fiend

Walk'd up and down, alone, bent on his prey;
Alone, for other creature in this place,
Living or lifeleſs, to be found was none;
None yet, but store hereafter, from the earth,
Up hither, like aerial vapours, flew,
Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
With vanity had fill'd the works of men:
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory, or lasting fame,
Or happineſs in this, or the other life:
All, who have their reward on earth, the fruits
Of painful superstition, and blind zeal,
Naught seeking but the praise of men, here find
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds:
All the unaccomplish'd works of Nature's hand,
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
Diſsolved on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
Till final diſsolution, wander here:
Not in the neighbouring moon, as some have dream'd;
Those argent fields, more likely habitants,
Translated saints, or middle spirits hold,
Betwixt the angelical and human kind.
Hither, of ill-join'd sons and daughters born,
First, from the ancient world, those giants came,
With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd:
The builders next of Babel, on the plain
Of Sennaar; and still with vain design,
New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build.
Others came single; he who, to be deem'd
A god, leap'd fondly into Ætna flames,

Empedocles; and he who, to enjoy
Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea,
Cleombrotus; and many more too long,
Embryos, and idiots, eremites, and friars,
White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery.
Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek,
In Golgotha, him dead, who lives in Heaven;
And they who, to be sure of Paradise,
Dying, put on the weeds of Dominic,
Or, in Franciscan think to pass disguised;
They pass the planets seven, and pass the fix'd,
And that crystalline sphere, whose balance weighs
The trepidation talk'd, and that first moved;
And now saint Peter, at Heaven's wicket, seems
To wait them with his keys; and now, at foot
Of Heaven's ascent, they lift their feet, when lo,
A violent cross wind, from either coast,
Blows them transverse, ten thousand leagues awry,
Into the devious air: then might ye see
Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, tost'd
And flutter'd into rags; then relicks, beads,
Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
The sport of winds: all these, upwhirl'd aloft,
Fly o'er the back side of the world, far off,
Into a limbo, large and broad, since call'd
The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
Long after, now unpeopled, and untrod.
All this dark globe the fiend found as he pass'd;
And long he wander'd, till at last, a gleam
Of dawning light turn'd thitherward in haste

His travell'd steps: far distant he descries,
Ascending, by degrees magnificent,
Up to the wall of Heaven, a structure high;
At top whereof, but far more rich, appear'd
The work, as of a kingly palace gate,
With frontispiece of diamond and gold
Embellish'd; thick with sparkling orient gems
The portal shone, inimitable on earth,
By model, or by shading pencil drawn.
The stairs were such, as whereon Jacob saw
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of guardians bright; when he from Esau fled
To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz
Dreaming by night, under the open sky,
And waking cry'd, This is the gate of Heaven!
Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but drawn up to Heaven, sometimes
Viewleſs: and underneath, a bright sea flow'd
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl; whereon,
Who after came from earth, sailing arrived,
Wafted by angels, or flew o'er the lake,
Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
The fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliſs:
Direct against which, open'd from beneath,
Just o'er the bliſsful seat of Paradise,
A paſsage down to the earth, a paſsage wide;
Wider by far than that of after-times,
Over mount Sion, and, though that were large,

Over the Promised Land, to God so dear:
By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
On high behests, his angels to and fro
Pafs'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard,
From Paneas, the fount of Jordan's flood,
To Beërsaba, where the Holy Land
Borders on Egypt, and the Arabian shore;
So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set
To darknefs, such as bound the ocean wave.
Satan from hence, now on the lower stair,
That scaled by steps of gold to Heaven gate,
Looks down with wonder, at the sudden view
Of all this world at once. As when a scout,
Through dark and desert ways, with peril gone
All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn,
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware,
The goodly prospect of some foreign land,
First seen; or some renown'd metropolis,
With glistering spires, and pinnacles adorn'd,
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams.
Such wonder seized, though after Heaven seen,
The spirit malign; but much more envy seized,
At sight of all this world, beheld so fair.
Round he surveys; and well might, where he stood
So high, above the circling canopy
Of night's extended shade; from eastern point
Of Libra, to the fleecy star, that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas,
Beyond the horizon. Then from pole to pole,

He views in breadth; and, without longer pause,
Down right into the world's first region, throws
His flight precipitant; and winds with ease,
Through the pure marble air, his oblique way,
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
Stars distant, but nigh hand, seem'd other worlds:
Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens, famed of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales;
Thrice happy isles: but who dwelt happy there,
He stay'd not to inquire. Above them all
The golden sun, in splendour likest Heaven,
Allured his eye: thither his course he bends,
Through the calm firmament; but up or down,
By centre, or eccentrick, hard to tell,
Or longitude; where the great luminary,
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
Dispenses light from far. They, as they move
Their starry dance, in numbers that compute
Days, months, and years, towards his all-cheering lamp,
Turn swift their various motions, or are turn'd
By his magnetick beam, that gently warms
The universe, and to each inward part,
With gentle penetration, though unseen,
Shoots invisible virtue, even to the deep;
So wonderously was set his station bright.
There lands the fiend, a spot like which, perhaps,
Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb,
Through his glazed optick tube, yet never saw.

The place he found beyond expreſsion bright,
Compared with aught on earth, metal or stone;
Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd,
With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire:
If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear;
If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
In Aaron's breast-plate, and a stone besides,
Imagined rather oft, than elsewhere seen;
That stone, or like to that, which here below,
Philosophers in vain so long have sought;
In vain, though, by their powerful art, they bind
Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound,
In various shapes, old Proteus from the sea,
Drain'd through a limbeck to his native form.
What wonder then, if fields and regions here
Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
Potable gold, when, with one virtuous touch,
The arch-chemick sun, so far from us remote,
Produces, with terrestrial humour mix'd,
Here in the dark, so many precious things,
Of colour glorious, and effect so rare?
Here, matter new to gaze the Devil met,
Undazzled; far and wide his eye commands;
For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,
But all sunshine: as when his beams, at noon,
Culminate from the equator; as they now
Shot upward, still direct, whence no way round
Shadow from body opaque can fall; and the air
No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray,

To objects distant far; whereby he soon
Saw, within ken, a glorious angel stand,
The same, whom John saw also in the sun:
His back was turn'd, but not his brightneſs hid.
Of beaming sunny rays, a golden tiar
Circled his head, nor leſs his locks behind,
Illustrious on his shoulders, fledge with wings,
Lay waving round: on some great charge employ'd
He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.
Glad was the spirit impure; as now in hope
To find, who might direct his wandering flight
To Paradise, the happy seat of man,
His journey's end, and our beginning woe.
But first he casts to change his proper shape,
Which else might work him danger or delay:
And now, a stripling cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such, as in his face
Youth smiled celestial, and, to every limb,
Suitable grace diffused; so well he feign'd.
Under a coronet, his flowing hair,
In curls on either cheek, play'd; wings he wore,
Of many a colour'd plume, sprinkled with gold;
His habit fit for speed succinct, and held,
Before his decent steps, a silver wand.
He drew not nigh unheard; the angel bright,
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
Admonish'd by his ear; and straight was known
The arch-angel Uriel, one of the seven,
Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
Stand ready at command; and are his eyes,

That run through all the Heavens, or, down to the Earth,
Bear his swift errands, over moist and dry,
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts.
Uriel, for thou, of those seven spirits, that stand
In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,
The first art wont his great authentick will,
Interpreter through highest Heaven, to bring,
Where all his sons thy embafsy attend;
And here art likeliest, by supreme decree,
Like honour to obtain, and, as his eye,
To visit oft this new creation round.
Unspeakable desire to see, and know,
All these his wonderous works, but chiefly man,
His chief delight and favour, him, for whom
All these his works so wonderous he ordain'd,
Hath brought me from the quires of cherubim,
Alone, thus wandering. Brightest seraph, tell,
In which of all these shining orbs hath man
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell;
That I may find him, and with secret gaze,
Or open admiration, him behold;
On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd:
That both in him, and all things, as is meet,
The universal Maker we may praise;
Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes,
To deepest Hell, and, to repair that lofs,
Created this new happy race of men,
To serve him better: wise are all his ways.

So spake the false dissembler unperceived;
For neither man nor angel can discern
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone,
By his permissive will, through Heaven and Earth:
And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill,
Where no ill seems: which now, for once, beguiled
Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held
The sharpest sighted spirit of all in Heaven;
Who, to the fraudulent impostor foul,
In his uprightness, answer thus return'd.
Fair angel, thy desire, which tends to know
The works of God, thereby to glorify
The great Work-master, leads to no excess,
That reaches blame; but rather merits praise,
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither,
From thy empyreal mansion, thus alone;
To witness with thine eyes, what some perhaps,
Contented with report, hear only in Heaven:
For wonderful indeed are all his works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance, always with delight.
But what created mind can comprehend
Their number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
I saw, when at his word, the formless mass,
This world's material mould, came to a heap.
Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar

Stood ruled; stood vast infinitude confined:
Till, at his second bidding, darkneſs fled,
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung.
Swift, to their several quarters, hasted then
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire;
And this ethereal quinteſsence of Heaven
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars
Numberleſs, as thou seest, and how they move;
Each had his place appointed, each his course:
The rest in circuit walls this universe.
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side,
With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;
That place is earth, the seat of man; that light
His day; which else, as the other hemisphere,
Night would invade: but there the neighbouring moon,
So call that opposite fair star, her aid
Timely interposes; and her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing, through mid Heaven,
With borrow'd light, her countenance triform,
Hence fills and empties, to enlighten the earth;
And, in her pale dominion, checks the night.
That spot, to which I point, is Paradise,
Adam's abode; those lofty shades his bower.
Thy way thou canst not miſs, me mine requires.
Thus said, he turn'd; and Satan bowing low,
As to superiour spirits is wont in Heaven,
Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
Took leave; and toward the coast of earth beneath,
Down from the ecliptick, sped with hoped succeſs.

Throws his steep flight, in many an airy wheel,
Nor stay'd, till on Niphates' top he lights.

THE

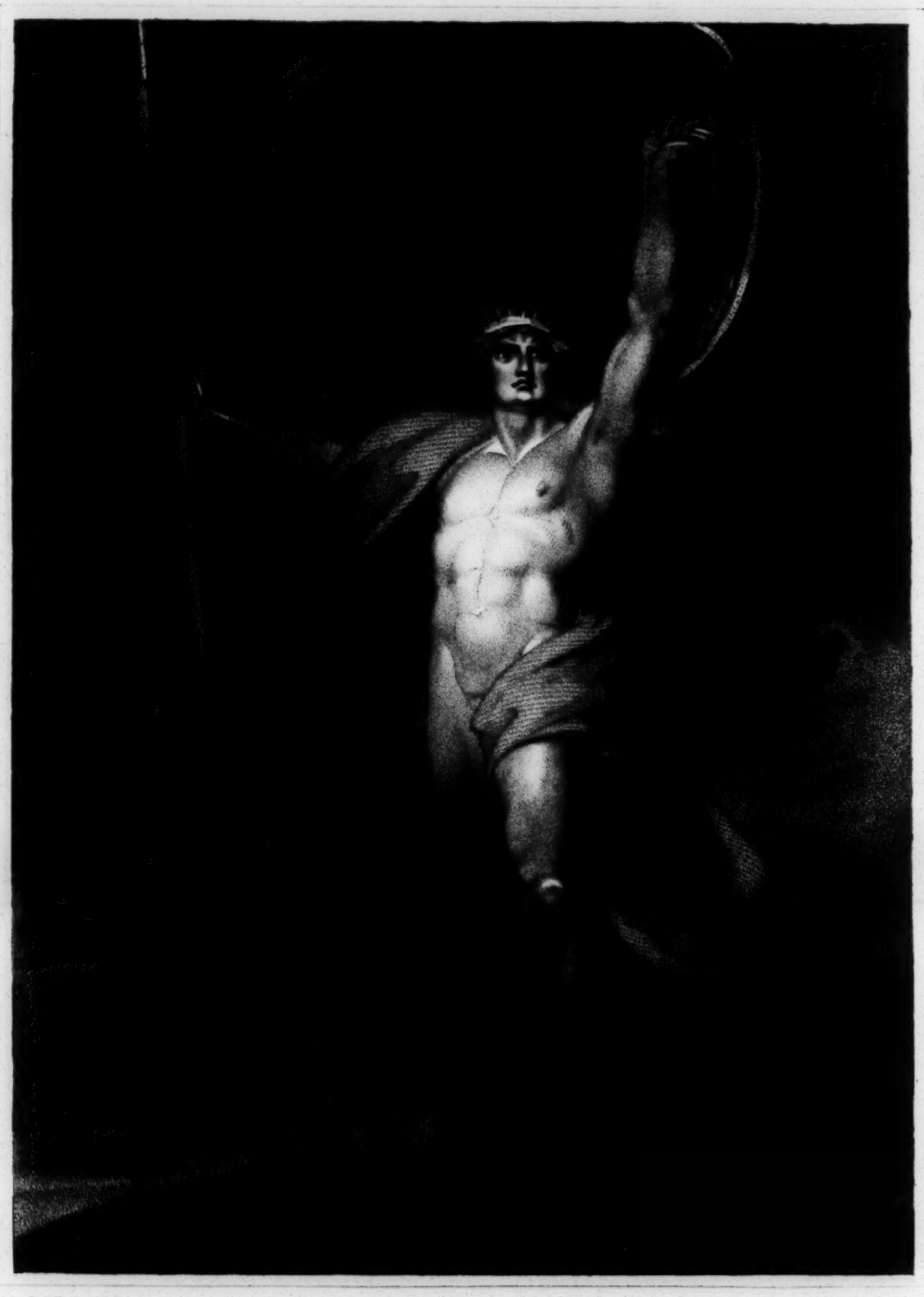
# FOURTH BOOK

OF

# PARADISE LOST

## THE ARGUMENT

Satan, now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place, where he must now attempt the bold enterprise, which he undertook alone, against God and Man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many paſsions, fear, envy, and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil, journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and situation is described; overleaps the bounds, sits in the shape of a cormorant on the tree of life, as highest in the garden, to look about him. The garden described; Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve; his wonder at their excellent form and happy state, but with resolution to work their fall; overhears their discourse, thence gathers, that the tree of knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under penalty of death; and thereon intends to found his temptation, by seducing them to transgreſs: then leaves them a while, to know further of their state, by some other means. Mean while Uriel, descending on a sun beam, warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil spirit had escaped the deep, and paſsed at noon by his sphere, in the shape of a good angel, down to Paradise; discovered after, by his furious gestures in the mount: Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest: their bower described; their evening worship. Gabriel, drawing forth his bands of night-watch, to walk the round of Paradise, appoints two strong angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil spirit should be there, doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping; there they find him, at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers, prepares resistance, but hindered by a sign from Heaven, flies out of Paradise.



R. Westall R.A. delt. J.P. Simon sculp.

**PARADISE LOST.**

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# PARADISE LOST

## BOOK IV

VERSE 1—20

O FOR that warning voice, which he, who saw
The Apocalypse, heard cry in Heaven aloud;
Then when the dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down, to be revenged on men,
" Woe to the inhabitants on earth!" that now,
While time was, our first parents had been warn'd
The coming of their secret foe, and 'scaped,
Haply so 'scaped his mortal snare. For now
Satan, now first inflamed with rage, came down,
The tempter ere the accuser of mankind,
To wreak on innocent frail man, his loſs
Of that first battle, and his flight to Hell:
Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold,
Far off and fearleſs, nor with cause to boast,
Begins his dire attempt; which, nigh the birth,
Now rolling, boils in his tumultuous breast,
And, like a devilish engine, back recoils
Upon himself. Horrour and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts, and, from the bottom, stir
The hell within him; for within him hell

He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell
One step, no more than from himself, can fly
By change of place. Now conscience wakes despair,
That slumber'd, wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be,
Worse; of worse deeds, worse sufferings must ensue.
Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view
Lay pleasant, his grieved look he fixes sad;
Sometimes towards Heaven, and the full-blazing sun,
Which now sat high in his meridian tower:
Then much revolving, thus in sighs began.
O thou, that with surpaſsing glory crown'd,
Look'st from thy sole dominion, like the God
Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminish'd heads; to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
That bring to my remembrance, from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
Till pride, and worse ambition, threw me down,
Warring in Heaven, against Heaven's matchleſs King:
Ah wherefore! he deserved no such return
From me, whom he created what I was,
In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.
What could be leſs than to afford him praise,
The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks?
How due! yet all his good proved ill in me,
And wrought but malice: lifted up so high
I 'sdain'd subjection, and thought one step higher

Would set me highest, and, in a moment, quit
The debt immense of endleſs gratitude,
So burdensome, still paying, still to owe;
Forgetful what from him I still received;
And understood not, that a grateful mind
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharged: what burden then?
O had his powerful destiny ordain'd
Me some inferiour angel, I had stood
Then happy; no unbounded hope had raised
Ambition. Yet why not? some other power
As great might have aspired, and me, though mean,
Drawn to his part: but other powers as great
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within,
Or from without, to all temptations arm'd.
Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand?
Thou hadst: whom hast thou then, or what to accuse,
But Heaven's free love, dealt equally to all?
Be then his love accursed, since love or hate,
To me alike, it deals eternal woe.
Nay, cursed be thou; since, against his, thy will
Chose freely, what it now so justly rues.
Me miserable! which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell:
And in the lowest deep, a lower deep,
Still threatening to devour me, opens wide:
To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven.
O then at last relent: is there no place
Left for repentance, none for pardon left?

None left but by submiſsion; and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame,
Among the spirits beneath, whom I seduced,
With other promises, and other vaunts,
Than to submit; boasting, I could subdue
The Omnipotent. Ah me, they little know,
How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
Under what torments inwardly I groan,
While they adore me on the throne of Hell.
With diadem and sceptre high advanced,
The lower still I fall, only supreme
In misery; such joy ambition finds.
But say, I could repent, and could obtain,
By act of grace, my former state; how soon
Would highth recall high thoughts, how soon unsay
What feign'd submiſsion swore? ease would recant
Vows made in pain, as violent and void.
For, never can true reconcilement grow,
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep:
Which would but lead me to a worse relapse,
And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
Short intermiſsion, bought with double smart.
This knows my punisher; therefore, as far
From granting he, as I from begging peace:
All hope excluded thus, behold, in stead
Of us out-cast, exiled, his new delight,
Mankind created; and for him this world.
So farewell hope, and with hope, farewell fear,
Farewell remorse: all good to me is lost:
Evil, be thou my good; by thee, at least,

Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold,
By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
As man ere long, and this new world, shall know.
Thus while he spake, each paſsion dimm'd his face,
Thrice changed with pale ire, envy, and despair;
Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld:
For heavenly minds, from such distempers foul,
Are ever clear. Whereof, he soon aware,
Each perturbation smooth'd, with outward calm,
Artificer of fraud; and was the first
That practised falsehood, under saintly show,
Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge:
Yet, not enough had practised to deceive
Uriel, once warn'd; whose eye pursued him down,
The way he went, and, on the Aſsyrian mount,
Saw him disfigured, more than could befall
Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
He mark'd, and mad demeanour, then alone,
As he supposed, all unobserved, unseen.
So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,
As with a rural mound, the champaign head
Of a steep wilderneſs, whose hairy sides,
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Acceſs deny'd; and, over head, up grew
Insuperable highth of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A sylvan scene; and, as the ranks ascend,

Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet, higher than their tops,
The verdurous wall of Paradise up sprung:
Which, to our general sire, gave prospect large,
Into this nether empire, neighbouring round.
And, higher than that wall, a circling row
Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,
Blossoms and fruits at once, of golden hue,
Appear'd, with gay enamell'd colours mix'd:
On which the sun more glad impress'd his beams,
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
When God hath shower'd the earth; so lovely seem'd
That landscape: and of pure, now purer air,
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All sadness but despair. Now gentle gales,
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils. As when to them, who sail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
Mozambic, off at sea, north-east winds blow
Sabean odours, from the spicy shore
Of Araby the blest; with such delay
Well pleased, they slack their course, and many a league,
Cheer'd with the grateful smell, old Ocean smiles.
So entertain'd those odorous sweets the fiend,
Who came their bane; though with them better pleased
Than Asmodëus with the fishy fume,
That drove him, though enamour'd, from the spouse
Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent

From Media, post to Egypt, there fast bound.
Now, to the ascent of that steep savage hill,
Satan had journey'd on, pensive and slow;
But further way found none; so thick entwined,
As one continued brake, the undergrowth
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd
All path of man or beast, that pafs'd that way.
One gate there only was, and that look'd east,
On the other side: which, when the arch-felon saw,
Due entrance he disdain'd; and in contempt,
At one slight bound, high overleap'd all bound,
Of hill or highest wall, and, sheer within,
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
Watching, where shepherds pen their flocks at eve,
In hurdled cots, amid the field secure,
Leaps o'er the fence, with ease into the fold:
Or, as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
Crofs-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no afsault,
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:
So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;
So, since into his church, lewd hirelings climb.
Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,
The middle tree, and highest there that grew,
Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life
Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death,
To them who lived; nor, on the virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant, but only used
For prospect, what well used, had been the pledge

Of immortality. So little knows
Any, but God alone, to value right
The good before him, but perverts best things
To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
Beneath him, with new wonder, now he views,
To all delight of human sense exposed,
In narrow room, nature's whole wealth; yea more,
A Heaven on Earth: for blifsful Paradise,
Of God the garden, was by him, in the east
Of Eden planted. Eden stretch'd her line,
From Auran eastward, to the royal towers
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings;
Or where the sons of Eden, long before,
Dwelt in Telafsar. In this pleasant soil,
His far more pleasant garden, God ordain'd;
Out of the fertile ground, he caused to grow
All trees of noblest kind, for sight, smell, taste;
And all amid them stood the tree of life,
High, eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold; and next to life,
Our death, the tree of knowledge grew fast by;
Knowledge of good, bought dear, by knowing ill.
Southward through Eden went a river large,
Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill
Pafs'd underneath ingulf'd; for God had thrown
That mountain, as his garden mould, high raised
Upon the rapid current; which, through veins
Of porous earth, with kindly thirst up drawn,
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
Water'd the garden: thence, united, fell

Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood;
Which, from his darksome paſsage now appears,
And now divided into four main streams,
Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm,
And country, whereof here needs no account;
But rather to tell how, if art could tell,
How, from that sapphire fount, the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy errour, under pendent shades,
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flowers, worthy of Paradise; which not nice art,
In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon
Pour'd forth profuse, on hill, and dale, and plain;
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierced shade
Imbrown'd the noontide bowers: thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various view;
Groves, whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm:
Others, whose fruit, burnish'd with golden rind,
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true,
If true, here only, and of delicious taste:
Betwixt them, lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interposed,
Or palmy hillock, or the flowery lap
Of some irriguous valley spread her store;
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves,
Of cool recefs, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant: mean while, murmuring waters fall

Down the slope hills, dispersed, or in a lake,
That to the fringed bank, with myrtle crown'd,
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
Led on the eternal spring. Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis
Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world; nor that sweet grove
Of Daphne, by Orontes, and the inspired
Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian isle,
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
Whom Gentiles Ammon call, and Libyan Jove,
Hid Amalthea, and her florid son
Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye;
Nor, where Abaſsin kings their iſsue guard,
Mount Amara, though this by some supposed
True Paradise, under the Ethiop line,
By Nilus' head, enclosed with shining rock,
A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
From this Aſsyrian garden, where the fiend
Saw, undelighted, all delight, all kind
Of living creatures, new to sight and strange.
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
Godlike erect, with native honour clad
In naked majesty, seem'd lords of all;

And worthy seem'd: for, in their looks divine,
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,
Severe, but in true filial freedom placed;
Whence true authority in men: though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd;
For contemplation he, and valour form'd,
For softneſs she, and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him.
His fair large front, and eye sublime, declared
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks,
Round from his parted forelock, manly hung,
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
She, as a veil, down to the slender waist,
Her unadorned golden treſses wore,
Dishevell'd, but in wanton ringlets waved,
As the vine curls her tendrils; which imply'd
Subjection, but required with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best received,
Yielded with coy submiſsion, modest pride,
And sweet, reluctant, amorous, delay.
Nor those mysterious parts were then conceal'd;
Then was not guilty shame. Dishonest shame
Of nature's works, honour dishonourable,
Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind
With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
And banish'd from man's life, his happiest life,
Simplicity, and spotleſs innocence.
So paſs'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
Of God or angel, for they thought no ill:

So hand in hand they pafs'd, the loveliest pair,
That ever since in love's embraces met;
Adam, the goodliest man of men since born
His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.
Under a tuft of shade, that on a green
Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain side,
They sat them down; and after no more toil,
Of their sweet gardening labour, than sufficed
To recommend cool zephyr, and made ease
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite
More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell;
Nectarine fruits, which the compliant boughs
Yielded them, side-long as they sat, recline
On the soft downy bank, damask'd with flowers.
The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind,
Still as they thirsted, scoop the brimming stream:
Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as beseems
Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,
Alone as they. About them, frisking play'd,
All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all chase,
In wood or wilderneſs, forest or den:
Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
Gambol'd before them; the unwieldy elephant,
To make them mirth, used all his might, and wreathed
His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly,
Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
His braided train, and of his fatal guile
Gave proof unheeded: others on the grafs

Couch'd, and now, fill'd with pasture, gazing sat,
Or bedward ruminating: for the sun
Declined was hasting now, with prone career,
To the ocean isles; and in the ascending scale
Of Heaven, the stars that usher evening rose:
When Satan, still in gaze, as first he stood,
Scarce thus at length fail'd speech recover'd sad.
O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold?
Into our room of blifs, thus high advanced,
Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps,
Not spirits, yet to heavenly spirits bright
Little inferiour; whom my thoughts pursue
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
In them divine resemblance, and such grace
The hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd.
Ah, gentle pair! ye little think how nigh
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe;
More woe, the more your taste is now of joy.
Happy, but for so happy ill secured,
Long to continue; and this high seat, your Heaven,
Ill fenced for Heaven, to keep out such a foe
As now is enter'd: yet no purposed foe
To you, whom I could pity, thus forlorn,
Though I unpitied: league with you I seek,
And mutual amity, so strait, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth: my dwelling haply may not please.
Like this fair Paradise, your sense; yet such
Accept your Maker's work: he gave it me.

Which I as freely give. Hell shall unfold,
To entertain you two, her widest gates,
And send forth all her kings; there will be room,
Not like these narrow limits, to receive
Your numerous offspring: if no better place,
Thank him who puts me, loath to this revenge
On you, who wrong me not, for him who wrong'd.
And should I, at your harmleſs innocence
Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
Honour and empire, with revenge enlarged,
By conquering this new world, compels me now
To do, what else, though damn'd, I should abhor.
So spake the fiend; and with neceſsity,
The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds.
Then, from his lofty stand on that high tree,
Down he alights, among the sportful herd
Of those four-footed kinds; himself now one,
Now other, as their shape served best his end,
Nearer to view his prey, and unespy'd,
To mark, what of their state he more might learn,
By word or action mark'd. About them round
A lion now he stalks, with fiery glare;
Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spy'd,
In some purlieu, two gentle fawns at play,
Straight couches close, then rising, changes oft
His couchant watch; as one who chose his ground,
Whence rushing, he might surest seize them both,
Griped in each paw: when Adam, first of men,
To first of women Eve, thus moving speech,
Turn'd him, all ear, to hear new utterance flow.

Sole partner, and sole part, of all these joys,
Dearer thyself than all; needs must the Power
That made us, and for us this ample world,
Be infinitely good, and of his good
As liberal and free as infinite;
That raised us from the dust, and placed us here,
In all this happineſs; who at his hand
Have nothing merited, nor can perform
Aught, whereof he hath need: He, who requires
From us no other service, than to keep
This one, this easy charge, of all the trees
In Paradise, that bear delicious fruit,
So various, not to taste that only tree
Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life.
So near grows death to life, whate'er death is;
Some dreadful thing, no doubt; for well thou know'st,
God hath pronounced it death to taste that tree;
The only sign of our obedience left,
Among so many signs of power and rule
Conferr'd upon us, and dominion given,
Over all other creatures, that poſſeſs
Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard
One easy prohibition, who enjoy
Free leave so large, to all things else, and choice
Unlimited, of manifold delights:
But let us ever praise him, and extol
His bounty, following our delightful task,
To prune these growing plants, and tend these flowers,
Which, were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.
To whom thus Eve replied. O thou, for whom,

And from whom I was form'd, flesh of thy flesh,
And without whom, am to no end, my guide
And head, what thou hast said is just and right.
For we to Him indeed all praises owe,
And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee,
Pre-eminent by so much odds; while thou,
Like consort to thyself, canst no where find.
That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awaked, and found myself reposed,
Under a shade on flowers, much wondering, where
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
Not distant far from thence, a murmuring sound
Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmoved,
Pure as the expanse of Heaven: I thither went,
With unexperienced thought, and laid me down
On the green bank, to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.
As I bent down to look, just opposite,
A shape within the watery gleam appear'd,
Bending to look on me: I started back,
It started back; but pleased, I soon return'd,
Pleased it return'd as soon, with answering looks
Of sympathy and love. There I had fix'd
Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warn'd me; What thou seest,
What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
And I will bring thee, where no shadow stays

Thy coming, and thy soft embraces; he
Whose image thou art, him thou shalt enjoy,
Inseparably thine; to him shalt bear
Multitudes, like thyself, and thence be call'd
Mother of human race. What could I do,
But follow straight, invisibly thus led?
Till I espied thee, fair indeed, and tall,
Under a platan; yet methought leſs fair,
Leſs winning soft, leſs amiably mild,
Than that smooth watery image: back I turn'd;
Thou following criedst aloud, Return, fair Eve;
Whom fliest thou? whom thou fliest, of him thou art,
His flesh, his bone; to give thee being, I lent
Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,
Substantial life, to have thee by my side
Henceforth, an individual solace dear:
Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim
My other half: with that thy gentle hand
Seized mine; I yielded; and from that time see,
How beauty is excell'd, by manly grace
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.
So spake our general mother; and with eyes
Of conjugal attraction, unreproved,
And meek surrender, half-embracing, lean'd
On our first father; half her swelling breast
Naked met his, under the flowing gold
Of her loose treſses hid: he, in delight,
Both of her beauty and submiſsive charms,
Smiled with superiour love, as Jupiter
On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds,

That shed May flowers; and preſs'd her matron lip,
With kiſses pure. Aside the Devil turn'd
For envy, yet, with jealous leer malign,
Eyed them askance, and to himself thus plain'd.
Sight hateful! sight tormenting! thus these two,
Imparadised in one another's arms,
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
Of bliſs on bliſs; while I to Hell am thrust,
Where neither joy, nor love, but fierce desire,
Among our other torments not the least,
Still unfulfill'd, with pain of longing, pines.
Yet let me not forget, what I have gain'd
From their own mouths: all is not theirs, it seems;
One fatal tree there stands, of knowledge call'd,
Forbidden them to taste: Knowledge forbidden?
Suspicious, reasonleſs. Why should their Lord
Envy them that? can it be sin to know?
Can it be death? and do they only stand
By ignorance? is that their happy state,
The proof of their obedience and their faith?
O fair foundation laid, whereon to build
Their ruin: Hence, I will excite their minds,
With more desire to know, and to reject
Envious commands, invented with design
To keep them low, whom knowledge might exalt,
Equal with gods: aspiring to be such,
They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?
But first, with narrow search, I must walk round
This garden, and no corner leave unspied;
A chance, but chance may lead where I may meet

Some wandering spirit of Heaven, by fountain side,
Or in thick shade retired, from him to draw
What further would be learn'd. Live while ye may,
Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed.
So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
But with sly circumspection; and began,
Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his roam.
Mean while, in utmost longitude, where heaven
With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun
Slowly descended, and with right aspect,
Against the eastern gate of Paradise,
Levell'd his evening rays: it was a rock
Of alabaster, piled up to the clouds,
Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent
Accefsible from earth, one entrance high;
The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
Still as it rose, impofsible to climb.
Betwixt these rocky pillars, Gabriel sat,
Chief of the angelick guards, awaiting night;
About him, exercised heroick games
The unarmed youth of Heaven; but nigh at hand,
Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
Hung high, with diamond flaming, and with gold.
Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even,
On a sun-beam, swift as a shooting star
In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fired
Impref's the air, and shows the mariner,
From what point of his compafs, to beware
Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste.

Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given
Charge and strict watch, that, to this happy place,
No evil thing approach or enter in.
This day, at highth of noon, came to my sphere
A spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know
More of the Almighty's works, and chiefly man,
God's latest image: I described his way,
Bent all on speed, and mark'd his airy gait;
But in the mount, that lies from Eden north,
Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks,
Alien from Heaven, with paſsions foul obscured:
Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade
Lost sight of him. One of the banish'd crew,
I fear, hath ventured from the deep, to raise
New troubles; him thy care must be to find.
To whom the winged warriour thus return'd.
Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
Amid the sun's bright circle, where thou sit'st,
See far and wide. In at this gate none paſs
The vigilance here placed, but such as come
Well known from Heaven; and since meridian hour
No creature thence: if spirit of other sort,
So minded, have o'erleap'd these earthy bounds
On purpose; hard thou know'st it, to exclude
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.
But, if within the circuit of these walks,
In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know.
So promised he; and Uriel to his charge
Return'd, on that bright beam, whose point, now raised,

Bore him slope downward to the sun, now fall'n
Beneath the Azores; whether the prime orb,
Incredible how swift, had thither roll'd
Diurnal, or this less voluble earth,
By shorter flight to the east, had left him there,
Arraying, with reflected purple and gold,
The clouds, that on his western throne attend.
Now came still evening on, and twilight gray
Had in her sober livery all things clad;
Silence accompanied; for beast and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests,
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale;
She, all night long, her amorous descant sung;
Silence was pleased: now glow'd the firmament
With living sapphires: Hesperus, that led
The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length
Apparent queen, unveil'd her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.
When Adam thus to Eve. Fair consort, the hour
Of night, and all things now retired to rest,
Mind us of like repose; since God hath set
Labour and rest, as day and night, to men
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep,
Now falling with soft slumberous weight, inclines
Our eyelids: other creatures, all day long,
Rove idle, unemploy'd, and less need rest;
Man hath his daily work of body or mind
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of Heaven on all his ways:

While other animals inactive range,
And of their doings God takes no account.
To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east,
With first approach of light, we must be risen,
And at our pleasant labour, to reform
Yon flowery arbours, yonder alleys green,
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
That mock our scant manuring, and require
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth:
Those blosſoms also, and those dropping gums,
That lie bestrown, unsightly, and unsmooth,
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease:
Mean while, as nature wills, night bids us rest.
To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorn'd.
My author and disposer, what thou bidst,
Unargued, I obey; so God ordains;
God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise.
With thee conversing, I forget all time;
All seasons, and their change, all please alike.
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,
When first, on this delightful land, he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glistering with dew; fragrant the fertile earth,
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild; then silent night,
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of Heaven, her starry train:
But neither breath of morn, when she ascends

With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun,
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glistering with dew; nor fragrance after showers:
Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night,
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
Or glittering star-light, without thee, is sweet.
But wherefore all night long shine these? for whom
This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?
To whom our general ancestor replied.
Daughter of God and Man, accomplish'd Eve,
These have their course to finish, round the earth,
By morrow evening; and from land to land,
In order, though to nations yet unborn,
Ministering light prepared, they set and rise:
Lest total darkneſs should, by night, regain
Her old poſſeſsion, and extinguish life
In nature, and all things; which these soft fires,
Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat,
Of various influence, foment and warm,
Temper or nourish; or in part shed down
Their stellar virtue, on all kinds that grow
On earth, made hereby apter to receive
Perfection, from the sun's more potent ray.
These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,
Shine not in vain; nor think, though men were none,
That Heaven would want spectators, God want praise:
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:
All these, with ceaseleſs praise, his works behold,
Both day and night: how often, from the steep

Of echoing hill, or thicket, have we heard
Celestial voices, to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to others note,
Singing their great Creator? Oft in bands,
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds,
In full harmonick number join'd, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven.
Thus talking, hand in hand alone, they pass'd
On to their blissful bower; it was a place
Chosen by the sovereign Planter, when he framed
All things to Man's delightful use; the roof,
Of thickest covert, was inwoven shade,
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamine,
Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought
Mosaick; under foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay,
Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem: other creature here,
Beast, bird, insect, or worm, durst enter none;
Such was their awe of man. In shadier bower,
More sacred and sequester'd, though but feign'd,
Pan nor Silvanus never slept, nor Nymph,
Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed;

And heavenly quires the hymenean sung,
What day, the genial angel to our sire
Brought her, in naked beauty more adorn'd:
More lovely than Pandora, whom the gods
Endow'd with all their gifts, and O too like
In sad event, when, to the unwiser son
Of Japhet, brought by Hermes, she insnared
Mankind, with her fair looks, to be avenged
On him, who had stole Jove's authentick fire.
Thus, at their shady lodge arrived, both stood,
Both turn'd; and, under open sky, adored
The God that made both sky, air, earth and heaven,
Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
And starry pole: Thou also madest the night,
Maker omnipotent, and thou the day;
Which we, in our appointed work employ'd,
Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help,
And mutual love, the crown of all our blifs,
Ordain'd by thee; and this delicious place,
For us too large, where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropp'd falls to the ground.
But thou hast promised from us two a race,
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodnefs infinite, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.
This said unanimous, and other rites
Observing none, but adoration pure,
Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
Handed they went; and eased the putting off
These troublesome disguises which we wear,

Straight side by side were laid: nor turn'd, I ween,
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refused:
Whatever hypocrites austerely talk,
Of purity, and place, and innocence;
Defaming as impure, what God declares
Pure, and commands to some; leaves free to all.
Our Maker bids increase; who bids abstain,
But our destroyer, foe to God and Man?
Hail wedded love, mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise, of all things common else.
By thee adulterous lust was driven from men,
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee,
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother, first were known.
Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place;
Perpetual fountain of domestick sweets;
Whose bed is undefiled, and chaste pronounced,
Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs used.
Here, love his golden shafts employs, here, lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
Reigns here, and revels; not in the bought smile
Of harlots, loveleſs, joyleſs, unendear'd,
Casual fruition; nor in court amours,
Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
Or serenade, which the starved lover sings
To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.

These, lull'd by nightingales, embracing slept,
And, on their naked limbs, the flowery roof
Shower'd roses, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on,
Blefs'd pair; and O yet happiest, if ye seek
No happier state, and know, to know no more.
Now had night measured, with her shadowy cone,
Half way up hill, this vast sublunar vault;
And, from their ivory port, the cherubim
Forth ifsuing, at the accustom'd hour, stood arm'd
To their night watches, in warlike parade;
When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake.
Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south,
With strictest watch; these other wheel the north;
Our circuit meets full west. As flame they part,
Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.
From these, two strong and subtle spirits he call'd,
That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge.
Ithuriel and Zephon, with wing'd speed,
Search through this garden, leave unsearch'd no nook;
But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge,
Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.
This evening, from the sun's decline arrived,
Who tells of some infernal spirit, seen
Hitherward bent; who could have thought? escaped
The bars of Hell, on errand bad, no doubt:
Such where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.
So saying, on he led his radiant files,
Dazzling the moon; these to the bower direct,
In search of whom they sought: him there they found,
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve,

Eſsaying, by his devilish art, to reach
The organs of her fancy; and with them, forge
Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams;
Or, if inspiring venom, he might taint
The animal spirits, that from pure blood arise,
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure; thence raise,
At least, distemper'd, discontented thoughts,
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits, engendering pride.
Him thus intent, Ithuriel, with his spear,
Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns,
Of force, to its own likeneſs. Up he starts,
Discover'd and surprised: as when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid
Fit for the tun, some magazine to store,
Against a rumour'd war; the smutty grain,
With sudden blaze diffused, inflames the air:
So started up, in his own shape, the fiend.
Back stepp'd those two fair angels, half amazed,
So sudden to behold the grisly king;
Yet thus, unmoved with fear, accost him soon.

Which of those rebel spirits, adjudged to Hell,
Comest thou, escaped thy prison? and transform'd,
Why sat'st thou, like an enemy in wait,
Here watching, at the head of these that sleep?

Know ye not then, said Satan, fill'd with scorn,
Know ye not me? ye knew me once, no mate
For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar:
Not to know me, argues yourselves unknown,

The lowest of your throng; or if ye know,
Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
Your meſsage, like to end as much in vain?
To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with scorn.
Think not, revolted spirit, thy shape the same,
Or undiminish'd brightneſs to be known,
As when thou stood'st in Heaven, upright and pure;
That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee; and thou resemblest now
Thy sin, and place of doom, obscure and foul.
But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account
To him who sent us, whose charge is, to keep
This place inviolable, and these from harm.
So spake the cherub; and his grave rebuke,
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace
Invincible. Abash'd the Devil stood,
And felt how awful goodneſs is, and saw
Virtue, in her shape how lovely; saw, and pined
His loſs; but chiefly, to find here observed,
His lustre visibly impair'd; yet seem'd
Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,
Best with the best, the sender, not the sent,
Or all at once; more glory will be won,
Or leſs be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,
Will save us trial, what the least can do
Single against thee, wicked, and thence weak.
The fiend replied not, overcome with rage;
But, like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on,
Champing his iron curb: to strive, or fly,
He held it vain; awe from above had quell'd

His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh
The western point, where those half-rounding guards
Just met, and closing stood, in squadron join'd,
Awaiting next command. To whom their chief,
Gabriel, from the front, thus call'd aloud.

O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet,
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
Ithuriel and Zephon, through the shade;
And with them comes a third, of regal port,
But faded splendour wan; who, by his gait,
And fierce demeanour, seems the prince of Hell;
Not likely to part hence without contest:
Stand firm, for in his look defiance lowers.

He scarce had ended, when those two approach'd;
And brief related, whom they brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and posture couch'd.

To whom, with stern regard, thus Gabriel spake.
Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescribed
To thy transgreſsions, and disturb'd the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgreſs,
By thy example? but have power and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place;
Employ'd, it seems, to violate sleep, and those,
Whose dwelling God hath planted here, in blifs.

To whom, thus Satan, with contemptuous brow.
Gabriel, thou hadst in Heaven the esteem of wise,
And such I held thee; but this question ask'd
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?
Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,
Though thither doom'd? Thou wouldst thyself, no doubt,

And boldly venture, to whatever place,
Farthest from pain; where thou mightst hope to change
Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
Dole with delight, which in this place I sought:
To thee no reason, who know'st only good,
But evil hast not try'd: and wilt object
His will, who bound us? let him surer bar
His iron gates, if he intends our stay
In that dark durance: thus much what was ask'd.
The rest is true; they found me where they say;
But that implies not violence, or harm.
  Thus he in scorn. The warlike angel moved,
Disdainfully, half smiling, thus replied.
O lofs of one in Heaven, to judge of wise,
Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew;
And now returns him, from his prison 'scaped,
Gravely in doubt, whether to hold them wise
Or not, who ask, what boldnefs brought him hither,
Unlicensed, from his bounds in Hell prescribed;
So wise he judges it, to fly from pain
However, and to 'scape his punishment.
So judge thou still, presumptuous; till the wrath,
Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight
Sevenfold; and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain
Can equal anger infinite provoked.
But wherefore thou alone? wherefore, with thee,
Came not all Hell broke loose? is pain to them
Lefs pain, lefs to be fled; or thou than they
Lefs hardy to endure? courageous chief!

The first in flight from pain; hadst thou alleged
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.
  To which the fiend thus answer'd, frowning stern.
Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain,
Insulting angel; well thou know'st I stood
Thy fiercest, when in battle, to thy aid,
The blasting vollied thunder made all speed,
And seconded, thy else not dreaded spear.
But still thy words at random, as before,
Argue thy inexperience, what behoves,
From hard essays, and ill successes past,
A faithful leader, not to hazard all,
Through ways of danger, by himself untry'd:
I therefore, I alone, first undertook
To wing the desolate abyss, and spy
This new created world, whereof in Hell
Fame is not silent; here in hope to find
Better abode, and my afflicted powers
To settle here on earth, or in mid air;
Though, for possession, put to try once more
What thou and thy gay legions dare against;
Whose easier business were to serve their Lord,
High up in Heaven, with songs to hymn his throne,
And practised distances to cringe, not fight.
  To whom, the warriour angel soon replied.
To say, and straight unsay, pretending first
Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
Argues no leader, but a liar traced.
Satan! and couldst thou faithful add? O name,

O sacred name of faithfulneſs profaned!
Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.
Was this your discipline and faith engaged,
Your military obedience, to diſsolve
Allegiance to the acknowledged Power supreme?
And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
Patron of liberty; who, more than thou
Once fawn'd, and cringed, and servilely adored
Heaven's awful Monarch? wherefore, but in hope
To dispoſseſs him, and thyself to reign?
But mark, what I aread thee now; Avaunt!
Fly thither whence thou fledst: if, from this hour,
Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,
Back to the infernal pit I drag thee, chain'd,
And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
The facile gates of Hell, too slightly barr'd.
So threaten'd he; but Satan to no threats
Gave heed, but waxing more in rage replied.
Then, when I am thy captive, talk of chains,
Proud limitary cherub; but ere then,
Far heavier load thyself expect to feel,
From my prevailing arm; though Heaven's King
Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
Used to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels,
In progreſs through the road of Heaven, star-paved.
While thus he spake, the angelick squadron bright
Turn'd fiery red, sharpening, in mooned horns,
Their phalanx, and began to hem him round,
With ported spears; as thick, as when a field

Of Ceres, ripe for harvest, waving bends
Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
Sways them; the careful ploughman doubting stands,
Lest, on the threshing floor, his hopeful sheaves
Prove chaff. On the other side, Satan alarm'd,
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
Like Teneriffe, or Atlas, unremoved:
His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
Sat horrour plumed; nor wanted in his grasp,
What seem'd, both spear and shield. Now dreadful deeds
Might have ensued, nor only Paradise,
In this commotion, but the starry cope
Of Heaven, perhaps, or all the elements,
At least, had gone to wrack, disturb'd and torn
With violence of this conflict, had not soon
The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
Hung forth in Heaven his golden scales; yet seen
Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign;
Wherein, all things created first he weigh'd,
The pendulous round earth, with balanced air
In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
Battles and realms: in these he put two weights,
The sequel each of parting and of fight;
The latter quick up flew, and kick'd the beam.
Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the fiend.

Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine,
Neither our own, but given; what folly then
To boast what arms can do? since thine, no more
Than Heaven permits; nor mine, though doubled now,
To trample thee as mire: for proof look up,

And read thy lot, in yon celestial sign;
Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how weak,
If thou resist. The fiend look'd up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night.

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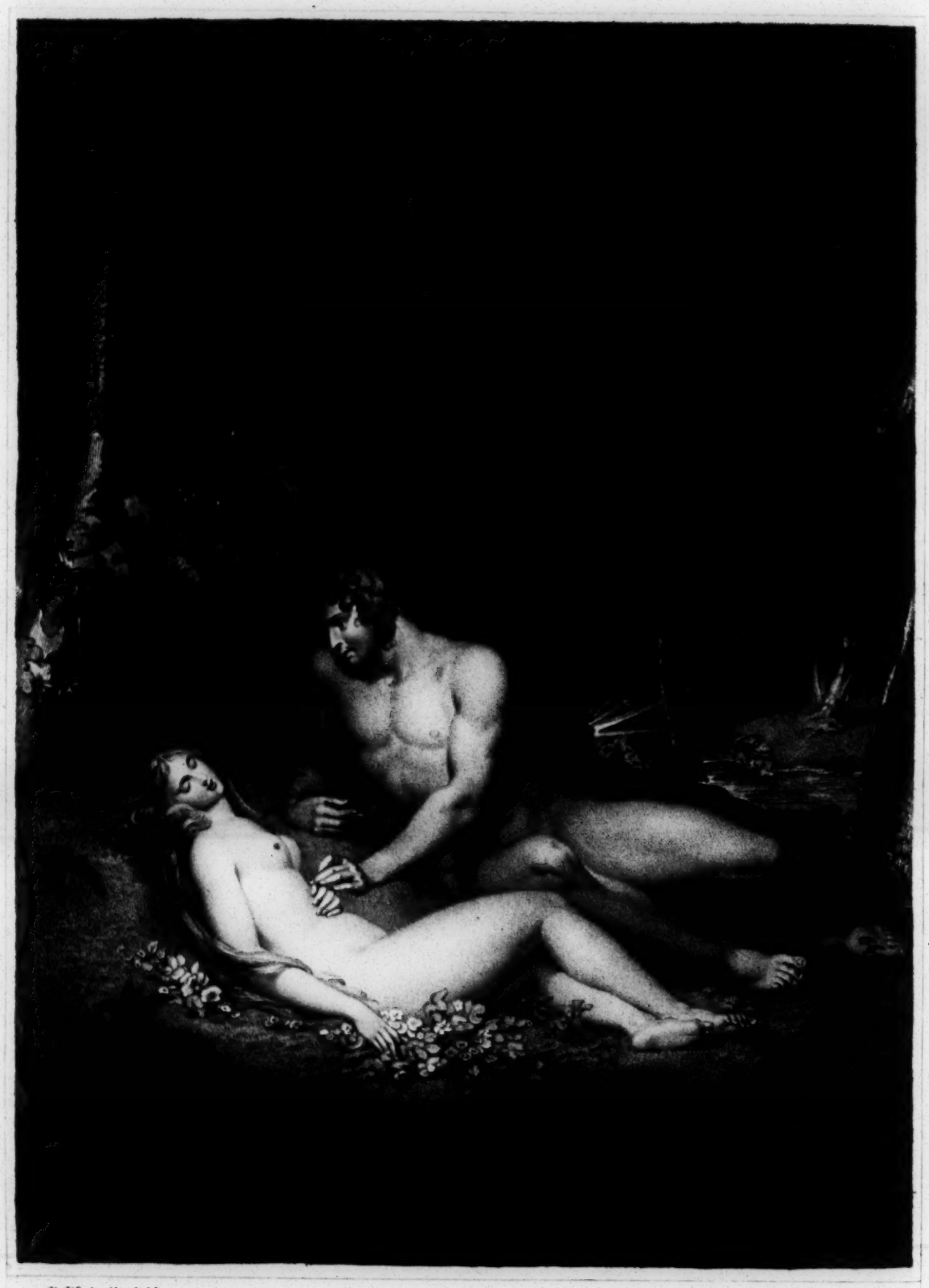
# FIFTH BOOK

OF

# PARADISE LOST

## THE ARGUMENT

Morning approached, Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream; he likes it not, yet comforts her. They come forth to their day labours: their morning hymn, at the door of their bower. God, to render man inexcusable, sends Raphael to admonish him of his obedience, of his free estate, of his enemy near at hand; who he is, and why his enemy; and whatever else may avail Adam to know. Raphael comes down to Paradise; his appearance described, his coming discerned by Adam afar off, sitting at the door of his bower; he goes out to meet him, brings him to his lodge, entertains him with the choicest fruits of Paradise, got together by Eve; their discourse at table. Raphael performs his mefsage, minds Adam of his state, and of his enemy; relates, at Adam's request, who that enemy is, and how he came to be so; beginning from his first revolt in Heaven, and the occasion thereof; how he drew his legions after him, to the parts of the north, and there incited them to rebel with him; persuading all but only Abdiel, a seraph, who in argument difsuades and opposes him, then forsakes him.



R. Westall del.ᵗ R. Earlom sculp.ᵗ

*PARADISE LOST.*

*B. 5. L. II.*

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# PARADISE LOST

## BOOK V

VERSE 1—20

Now morn, her rosy steps in the eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl;
When Adam waked, so custom'd; for his sleep
Was airy light, from pure digestion bred,
And temperate vapours bland; which the only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song
Of birds on every bough: so much the more
His wonder was, to find unwaken'd Eve,
With trefses discomposed, and glowing cheek,
As through unquiet rest. He on his side
Leaning, half raised, with looks of cordial love,
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then with voice
Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus. Awake,
My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,
Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight,
Awake; the morning shines, and the fresh field

Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed;
How nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom, extracting liquid sweet.
  Such whispering waked her, but with startled eye
On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake.
  O sole, in whom my thoughts find all repose,
My glory, my perfection, glad I see
Thy face, and morn return'd; for I this night,
Such night till this I never paſs'd, have dream'd,
If dream'd, not as I oft am wont, of thee,
Works of day past, or morrow's next design;
But of offence and trouble, which my mind
Knew never, till this irksome night. Methought,
Close at mine ear, one call'd me forth to walk,
With gentle voice; I thought it thine: it said,
Why sleep'st thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
To the night-warbling bird, that now awake,
Tunes sweetest his love-labour'd song; now reigns
Full orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light
Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,
If none regard: Heaven wakes with all his eyes;
Whom to behold but thee, nature's desire?
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment,
Attracted by thy beauty, still to gaze.
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;
To find thee I directed then my walk;
And on, methought, alone I paſs'd through ways,

That brought me on a sudden to the tree
Of interdicted knowledge: fair it seem'd,
Much fairer to my fancy than by day:
And as I wondering look'd, beside it stood
One shaped and wing'd like one of those from Heaven,
By us oft seen; his dewy locks distill'd
Ambrosia; on that tree he also gazed:
And, O fair plant, said he, with fruit surcharged,
Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,
Nor God, nor Man? is knowledge so despised?
Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?
Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
Longer thy offer'd good; why else set here?
This said, he paused not, but with vent'rous arm
He pluck'd, he tasted: me damp horrour chill'd,
At such bold words, vouch'd with a deed so bold:
But he thus, overjoy'd; O fruit divine!
Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropp'd,
Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
For gods, yet able to make gods of men:
And why not gods of men, since good, the more
Communicated, more abundant grows,
The author not impair'd, but honour'd more?
Here, happy creature, fair angelick Eve,
Partake thou also; happy though thou art,
Happier thou may'st be, worthier canst not be:
Taste this, and be henceforth, among the gods,
Thyself a goddess; not to earth confined,
But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes
Ascend to Heaven, by merit thine; and see

What life the gods live there, and such live thou.
So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
Even to my mouth, of that same fruit held part,
Which he had pluck'd; the pleasant savoury smell
So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought,
Could not but taste. Forthwith, up to the clouds,
With him I flew; and underneath beheld
The earth outstretch'd, immense, a prospect wide
And various: wondering at my flight and change
To this high exaltation; suddenly
My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
And fell asleep; but O how glad I waked,
To find this but a dream! Thus Eve her night
Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad.
Best image of myself, and dearer half,
The trouble of thy thoughts, this night in sleep,
Affects me equally; nor can I like
This uncouth dream, of evil sprung I fear:
Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,
Created pure. But know, that in the soul
Are many lesser faculties, that serve
Reason as chief; among these fancy next
Her office holds; of all external things,
Which the five watchful senses represent,
She forms imaginations, airy shapes,
Which reason joining, or disjoining, frames
All what we affirm, or what deny, and call
Our knowledge, or opinion; then retires,
Into her private cell, when nature rests.
Oft, in her absence, mimick fancy wakes

To imitate her; but misjoining shapes,
Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams,
Ill matching words and deeds, long past or late.
Some such resemblances, methinks, I find
Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream,
But with addition strange; yet be not sad.
Evil into the mind of God or man
May come and go, so unapproved, and leave
No spot or blame behind: which gives me hope,
That, what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream,
Waking, thou never wilt consent to do.
Be not dishearten'd then, nor cloud those looks,
That wont to be more cheerful and serene,
Than when fair morning first smiles on the world;
And let us to our fresh employments rise,
Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers,
That open now their choicest bosom'd smells,
Reserved from night, and kept for thee in store.
So cheer'd he his fair spouse, and she was cheer'd;
But silently a gentle tear let fall
From either eye, and wiped them with her hair;
Two other precious drops that ready stood,
Each in their crystal sluice, he, ere they fell,
Kiss'd; as the gracious signs of sweet remorse,
And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended.
So all was clear'd, and to the field they haste.
But first, from under shady arborous roof,
Soon as they forth were come, to open sight
Of day-spring, and the sun, who scarce up risen,
With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean brim,

Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,
Discovering, in wide landscape, all the east
Of Paradise, and Eden's happy plains;
Lowly they bow'd adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid,
In various style; for, neither various style,
Nor holy rapture wanted they, to praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounced, or sung
Unmeditated; such prompt eloquence
Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse,
More tunable than needed lute or harp,
To add more sweetneſs; and they thus began.
  These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty, thine this universal frame,
Thus wonderous fair; thyself how wonderous then!
Unspeakable, who sit'st above these Heavens,
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
Thy goodneſs beyond thought, and power divine.
Speak ye, who best can tell, ye sons of light,
Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in Heaven,
On Earth, join all ye creatures, to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.
Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,
If better, thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime.

Thou sun, of this great world both eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater, sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,
And when high noon hast gain'd, and when thou fall'st.
Moon, that now meet'st the orient sun, now fliest,
With the fix'd stars, fix'd in their orb that flies,
And ye five other wandering fires, that move
In mystick dance, not without song, resound
His praise, who, out of darknefs, call'd up light.
Air, and ye elements, the eldest birth
Of nature's womb, that in quaternion run
Perpetual circle, multiform; and mix
And nourish all things; let your ceaselefs change
Vary to our great Maker still new praise.
Ye mists and exhalations, that now rise
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
In honour to the world's great Author rise;
Whether, to deck with clouds the uncolour'd sky,
Or wet the thirsty earth, with falling showers,
Rising or falling, still advance his praise.
His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow,
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye pines,
With every plant, in sign of worship wave.
Fountains, and ye that warble, as ye flow,
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
Join voices all ye living souls: ye birds,
That singing up to Heaven gate ascend,
Bear on your wings, and in your notes, his praise.
Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk

The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep;
Witneſs, if I be silent, morn or even,
To hill or valley, fountain, or fresh shade,
Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
Hail, universal Lord, be bounteous still
To give us only good; and if the night
Have gather'd aught of evil, or conceal'd,
Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark.
So pray'd they innocent; and to their thoughts
Firm peace recover'd soon, and wonted calm.
On to their morning's rural work they haste,
Among sweet dews and flowers; where any row
Of fruit trees, over woody, reach'd too far
Their pamper'd boughs, and needed hands to check
Fruitleſs embraces: or, they led the vine
To wed her elm; she spoused, about him twines
Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
Her dower, the adopted clusters, to adorn
His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd, beheld
With pity Heaven's high King, and to him call'd
Raphael, the sociable spirit, that deign'd
To travel with Tobias, and secured
His marriage with the seven-times-wedded maid.
Raphael, said he, thou hear'st what stir on earth,
Satan, from Hell 'scaped, through the darksome gulf,
Hath raised in Paradise, and how disturb'd
This night the human pair; how he designs,
In them, at once to ruin all mankind.
Go therefore, half this day, as friend with friend,
Converse with Adam, in what bower or shade

Thou find'st him, from the heat of noon retired,
To respite his day-labour with repast,
Or with repose; and such discourse bring on,
As may advise him of his happy state;
Happinefs in his power, left free to will,
Left to his own free will, his will though free,
Yet mutable; whence warn him, to beware
He swerve not, too secure: tell him withal
His danger, and from whom; what enemy,
Late fall'n himself from Heaven, is plotting now
The fall of others, from like state of blifs:
By violence? no, for that shall be withstood;
But by deceit and lies: this let him know,
Lest wilfully transgrefsing, he pretend
Surprisal, unadmonish'd, unforewarn'd.
So spake the eternal Father, and fulfill'd
All justice: nor delay'd the winged saint,
After his charge received; but from among
Thousand celestial ardours, where he stood
Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, up springing light,
Flew through the midst of Heaven; the angelick quires,
On each hand parting, to his speed gave way,
Through all the empyreal road; till, at the gate
Of Heaven arrived, the gate self-open'd wide,
On golden hinges turning, as by work
Divine, the sovereign Architect had framed.
From hence no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
Star interposed: however small he sees,
Not unconform to other shining globes,
Earth, and the garden of God, with cedars crown'd

Above all hills. As when, by night, the glaſs
Of Galileo, leſs aſsured, observes
Imagined lands and regions in the moon:
Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades,
Delos or Samos first appearing, kens
A cloudy spot. Down thither, prone in flight,
He speeds, and, through the vast ethereal sky,
Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing;
Now on the polar winds, then, with quick fan,
Winnows the buxom air; till within soar
Of towering eagles, to all the fowls he seems
A phœnix, gazed by all, as that sole bird,
When to inshrine his relicks, in the sun's
Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
At once, on the eastern cliff of Paradise
He lights, and to his proper shape returns,
A seraph wing'd: six wings he wore, to shade
His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast,
With regal ornament; the middle pair
Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold,
And colours dipp'd in Heaven; the third his feet
Shadow'd from either heel, with feather'd mail,
Sky-tinctured grain. Like Maia's son he stood,
And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd
The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands
Of angels, under watch; and to his state,
And to his meſsage high, in honour rise;
For, on some meſsage high they gueſs'd him bound.

Their glittering tents he pafs'd, and now is come
Into the blifsful field, through groves of myrrh,
And flowering odours, cafsia, nard, and balm;
A wildernefs of sweets: for nature here
Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will
Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
Wild above rule or art; enormous blifs.
Him, through the spicy forest onward come,
Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat
Of his cool bower, while now the mounted sun
Shot down direct his fervid rays, to warm
Earth's inmost womb; more warmth than Adam needs.
And Eve within, due at her hour, prepared
For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst
Of nectarous draughts between, from milky stream,
Berry or grape: to whom thus Adam call'd.
  Haste hither, Eve, and worth thy sight behold,
Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
Comes this way moving; seems another morn
Risen on mid-noon: some great behest from Heaven
To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
And what thy stores contain, bring forth, and pour
Abundance, fit to honour and receive
Our heavenly stranger: well we may afford
Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow,
From large bestow'd; where nature multiplies
Her fertile growth, and, by disburdening, grows
More fruitful; which instructs us not to spare.

To whom thus Eve. Adam, earth's hallow'd mould,
Of God inspired, small store will serve, where store,
All seasons ripe for use, hangs on the stalk;
Save what by frugal storing firmneſs gains
To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes.
But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
Each plant and juiciest gourd, will pluck such choice,
To entertain our angel guest, as he
Beholding shall confeſs, that here on earth,
God hath dispensed his bounties as in Heaven.
So saying, with despatchful looks in haste
She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent,
What choice to choose for delicacy best,
What order, so contrived, as not to mix
Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant; but bring
Taste after taste, upheld with kindliest change;
Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk,
Whatever earth, all-bearing mother, yields
In India East or West, or middle shore
In Pontus, or the Punic coast, or where
Alcinous reign'd; fruit of all kinds, in coat
Rough or smooth rined, or bearded husk, or shell,
She gathers, tribute large; and on the board
Heaps with unsparing hand. For drink the grape
She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths
From many a berry, and, from sweet kernels preſs'd,
She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold
Wants her fit veſsels pure; then strows the ground
With rose and odours, from the shrub unfumed.
Mean while, our primitive great sire, to meet

His godlike guest, walks forth; without more train
Accompanied, than with his own complete
Perfections: in himself was all his state,
More solemn, than the tedious pomp that waits
On princes, when their rich retinue long,
Of horses led, and grooms besmear'd with gold,
Dazzles the crowd, and sets them all agape.
Nearer his presence, Adam, though not awed,
Yet with submiſs approach, and reverence meek,
As to a superiour nature, bowing low,
Thus said. Native of Heaven, for other place
None can than Heaven such glorious shape contain:
Since, by descending from the thrones above,
Those happy places thou hast deign'd a while
To want, and honour these; vouchsafe with us,
Two only, who yet by sovereign gift poſseſs
This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
To rest; and what the garden choicest bears
To sit and taste, till this meridian heat
Be over, and the sun more cool decline.
Whom thus, the angelick virtue answer'd mild.
Adam, I therefore came, nor art thou such
Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
As may not oft invite, though spirits of Heaven,
To visit thee; lead on then, where thy bower
O'ershades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,
I have at will. So to the sylvan lodge
They came, that like Pomona's arbour smiled,
With flowrets deck'd, and fragrant smells; but Eve
Undeck'd, save with herself, more lovely fair

Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddeſs feign'd
Of three, that in mount Ida naked strove,
Stood to entertain her guest from Heaven; no veil
She needed, virtue-proof; no thought infirm
Alter'd her cheek. On whom the angel hail
Bestow'd, the holy salutation, used
Long after, to bleſs'd Mary, second Eve.
Hail Mother of Mankind, whose fruitful womb
Shall fill the world, more numerous with thy sons,
Than, with these various fruits, the trees of God
Have heap'd this table. Raised of grassy turf
Their table was, and moſsy seats had round,
And on her ample square, from side to side,
All autumn piled; though spring and autumn here
Danced hand in hand. A while discourse they hold;
No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began
Our author. Heavenly stranger, please to taste
These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom
All perfect good, unmeasured out, descends
To us, for food and for delight, hath caused
The earth to yield; unsavoury food perhaps
To spiritual natures; only this I know,
That one celestial Father gives to all.
To whom the angel. Therefore what he gives,
Whose praise be ever sung, to man, in part
Spiritual, may of purest spirits be found
No ungrateful food: and, food alike those pure
Intelligential substances require,
As doth your rational; and both contain
Within them every lower faculty

Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
Tasting, concoct, digest, afsimilate,
And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
For know, whatever was created, needs
To be sustain'd and fed; of elements
The grofser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
Ethereal, and, as lowest, first the moon;
Whence, in her visage round, those spots, unpurged
Vapours, not yet into her substance turn'd.
Nor, doth the moon no nourishment exhale,
From her moist continent, to higher orbs.
The sun, that light imparts to all, receives
From all his alimental recompense,
In humid exhalations; and at even
Sups with the ocean. Though, in Heaven, the trees
Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
Yield nectar; though, from off the boughs each morn,
We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground
Cover'd with pearly grain: yet God hath here
Varied his bounty so with new delights,
As may compare with Heaven; and to taste
Think not I shall be nice. So down they sat,
And to their viands fell; nor seemingly
The angel, nor in mist, the common glofs
Of theologians; but with keen despatch
Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
To transubstantiate: what redounds, transpires
Through spirits with ease: nor wonder, if, by fire
Of sooty coal, the empirick alchymist

Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
As from the mine. Mean while, at table Eve
Minister'd naked, and their flowing cups
With pleasant liquors crown'd: O innocence
Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,
Then had the sons of God excuse to have been
Enamour'd, at that sight; but in those hearts
Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy
Was understood, the injured lover's hell.
Thus, when with meats and drinks they had sufficed,
Not burden'd nature, sudden mind arose
In Adam, not to let the occasion pass,
Given him by this great conference, to know
Of things above his world, and of their being,
Who dwell in Heaven; whose excellence he saw
Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms,
Divine effulgence; whose high power so far
Exceeded human; and his wary speech
Thus, to the empyreal minister, he framed.
Inhabitant with God, now know I well
Thy favour, in this honour done to man;
Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsafed
To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste;
Food not of angels, yet accepted so,
As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
At Heaven's high feasts to have fed: yet what compare?
To whom the winged hierarch replied.
O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return,

If not depraved from good, created all
Such to perfection, one first matter all,
Indued with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
But more refined, more spiritous, and pure;
As nearer to him placed, or nearer tending,
Each in their several active spheres assign'd,
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
Proportion'd to each kind. So, from the root,
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
More airy, last, the bright consummate flower
Spirits odorous breathes: flowers and their fruit,
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,
To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
To intellectual; give both life and sense,
Fancy and understanding; whence the soul
Reason receives, and reason is her being,
Discursive, or intuitive; discourse
Is oftest yours, the latter most is ours,
Differing but in degree, of kind the same.
Wonder not then, what God for you saw good,
If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
To proper substance: time may come, when men
With angels may participate, and find
No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare:
And, from these corporal nutriments perhaps,
Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
Improved by tract of time, and wing'd, ascend
Ethereal, as we; or may at choice,
Here, or in heavenly Paradises dwell;

If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire,
Whose progeny you are. Mean while, enjoy
Your fill, what happineſs this happy state
Can comprehend, incapable of more.
To whom the patriarch of mankind replied.
O favourable spirit, propitious guest,
Well hast thou taught the way, that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set,
From centre to circumference, whereon,
In contemplation of created things,
By steps we may ascend to God. But say,
What meant that caution join'd, If ye be found
Obedient? can we want obedience then
To him, or poſsibly his love desert,
Who form'd us from the dust, and placed us here,
Full to the utmost measure of what bliſs
Human desires can seek, or apprehend?
To whom the angel. Son of Heaven and Earth,
Attend: That thou art happy, owe to God;
That thou continuest such, owe to thyself;
That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.
This was that caution given thee; be advised.
God made thee perfect, not immutable;
And good he made thee; but to persevere
He left it in thy power, ordain'd thy will
By nature free, not over-ruled by fate
Inextricable, or strict neceſsity:
Our voluntary service he requires,
Not our neceſsitated; such with him

Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how
Can hearts, not free, be try'd whether they serve
Willing or no, who will, but what they must
By destiny, and can no other choose?
Myself and all the angelick host, that stand
In sight of God enthroned, our happy state
Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;
On other surety none: freely we serve,
Because we freely love, as in our will
To love or not; in this we stand or fall:
And some are fall'n, to disobedience fall'n,
And so from Heaven to deepest Hell. O fall,
From what high state of blifs, into what woe!
To whom our great progenitor. Thy words
Attentive, and with more delighted ear,
Divine instructor, I have heard, than when
Cherubick songs, by night from neighbouring hills,
Aerial musick send: nor knew I not
To be both will and deed created free;
Yet, that we never shall forget to love
Our Maker, and obey him, whose command
Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts
Afsured me, and still afsure: though what thou tell'st
Hath pafs'd in Heaven, some doubt within me move,
But more desire to hear, if thou consent,
The full relation, which must needs be strange,
Worthy of sacred silence to be heard;
And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun
Hath finish'd half his journey, and scarce begins
His other half, in the great zone of Heaven.

Thus Adam made request; and Raphael,
After short pause, assenting, thus began.
High matter thou enjoin'st me, O prime of men,
Sad task and hard; for how shall I relate,
To human sense, the invisible exploits
Of warring spirits? how, without remorse,
The ruin of so many, glorious once,
And perfect while they stood? how last unfold
The secrets of another world, perhaps
Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good
This is dispensed; and what surmounts the reach
Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
By likening spiritual to corporeal forms,
As may express them best; though, what if Earth
Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein
Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?
As yet this world was not; and Chaos wild
Reign'd where these Heavens now roll, where Earth now rests,
Upon her centre poized; when on a day,
For time, though in eternity, applied
To motion, measures all things durable
By present, past, and future; on such day,
As Heaven's great year brings forth, the empyreal host
Of angels, by imperial summons call'd,
Innumerable, before the Almighty's throne,
Forthwith from all the ends of Heaven appear'd,
Under their hierarchs, in orders bright:
Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced,
Standards and gonfalons, 'twixt van and rear,
Stream in the air, and for distinction serve

Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;
Or, in their glittering tiſsues, bear emblazed
Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
Recorded eminent. Thus, when in orbs
Of circuit inexpreſsible they stood,
Orb within orb, the Father infinite,
By whom, in bliſs imbosom'd, sat the Son,
Amidst, as from a flaming mount, whose top
Brightneſs had made invisible, thus spake.
Hear all ye Angels, progeny of light,
Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers,
Hear my decree, which unrevoked shall stand.
This day I have begot whom I declare
My only Son, and on this holy hill
Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
At my right hand; your head I him appoint;
And by myself have sworn, to him shall bow
All knees in Heaven, and shall confeſs him Lord:
Under his great vicegerent reign abide
United, as one individual soul,
For ever happy: Him who disobeys,
Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day
Cast out from God and bleſsed vision, falls
Into utter darkneſs, deep ingulf'd, his place
Ordain'd, without redemption, without end.
So spake the Omnipotent, and with his words
All seem'd well pleased; all seem'd, but were not all.
That day, as other solemn days, they spent
In song and dance, about the sacred hill;
Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere

Of planets and of fix'd, in all her wheels,
Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
Eccentrick, intervolved, yet regular,
Then most, when most irregular they seem;
And, in their motions, harmony divine
So smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear
Listens delighted. Evening now approach'd,
For we have also our evening and our morn;
We ours, for change delectable, not need:
Forthwith, from dance to sweet repast they turn
Desirous; all in circles as they stood,
Tables are set, and on a sudden piled
With angels' food; and rubied nectar flows
In pearl, in diamond, and mafsy gold,
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heaven.
On flowers reposed, and with fresh flowrets crown'd,
They eat, they drink, and, in communion sweet,
Quaff immortality and joy, secure
Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds
Excefs, before the all-bounteous King, who shower'd
With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.
Now when ambrosial night, with clouds exhaled
From that high mount of God, whence light and shade
Spring both, the face of brightest Heaven had changed
To grateful twilight; for night comes not there
In darker veil; and roseate dews disposed
All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest:
Wide over all the plain, and wider far
Than all this globous earth, in plain outspread,
Such are the courts of God, the angelick throng,

Dispersed in bands and files, their camp extend
By living streams, among the trees of life,
Pavilions numberleſs, and sudden rear'd,
Celestial tabernacles, where they slept,
Fann'd with cool winds; save those, who in their course,
Melodious hymns about the sovereign throne
Alternate, all night long. But not so waked
Satan; so call him now, his former name
Is heard no more in Heaven; he, of the first,
If not the first arch-angel, great in power,
In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
With envy against the Son of God, that day
Honour'd by his great Father, and proclaim'd
Meſsiah, King anointed, could not bear,
Through pride, that sight, and thought himself impair'd.
Deep malice thence conceiving, and disdain,
Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour,
Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolved,
With all his legions, to dislodge, and leave
Unworshipp'd, unobey'd, the throne supreme,
Contemptuous; and his next subordinate
Awakening, thus to him in secret spake.
Sleep'st thou, companion dear, what sleep can close
Thy eyelids? and remember'st what decree
Of yesterday, so late hath paſs'd the lips
Of Heaven's Almighty? Thou to me thy thoughts
Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart;
Both waking we were one: how then can now
Thy sleep diſsent? New laws thou seest imposed:
New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise

In us who serve; new counsels, to debate
What doubtful may ensue: more in this place
To utter is not safe. Assemble thou,
Of all those myriads which we lead, the chief;
Tell them, that by command, ere yet dim night
Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
And all who under me their banners wave,
Homeward, with flying march, where we possess
The quarters of the north; there to prepare
Fit entertainment, to receive our king,
The great Messiah, and his new commands;
Who speedily, through all the hierarchies,
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.
So spake the false arch-angel, and infused
Bad influence into the unwary breast
Of his associate: he together calls,
Or several one by one, the regent powers,
Under him regent; tells, as he was taught,
That the Most High, commanding, now ere night,
Now ere dim night had disencumber'd Heaven,
The great hierarchal standard was to move;
Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound
Or taint integrity: but all obey'd
The wonted signal, and superiour voice
Of their great potentate; for great indeed
His name, and high was his degree in Heaven:
His countenance, as the morning star that guides
The starry flock, allured them, and with lies,
Drew after him the third part of Heaven's host.

Meanwhile the eternal eye, whose sight discerns
Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
And from within the golden lamps, that burn
Nightly before him, saw, without their light,
Rebellion rising, saw in whom, how spread
Among the sons of morn, what multitudes
Were banded to oppose his high decree;
And smiling, to his only Son thus said.
  Son, thou in whom my glory I behold
In full resplendence, heir of all my might,
Nearly it now concerns us to be sure
Of our omnipotence, and, with what arms
We mean to hold, what anciently we claim
Of deity or empire; such a foe
Is rising, who intends to erect his throne
Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north;
Nor so content, hath in his thought to try,
In battle, what our power is, or our right.
Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
With speed what force is left, and all employ
In our defence, lest unawares we lose
This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.
  To whom the Son, with calm aspect and clear,
Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,
Made answer. Mighty Father, thou thy foes
Justly hast in derision, and secure,
Laugh'st at their vain designs, and tumults vain,
Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
Illustrates; when they see all regal power
Given me, to quell their pride, and in event

Know, whether I be dexterous to subdue
Thy rebels, or be found the worst in Heaven.
So spake the Son; but Satan with his powers
Far was advanced, on winged speed, an host
Innumerable, as the stars of night,
Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun
Impearls on every leaf, and every flower.
Regions they paſs'd, the mighty regencies
Of seraphim, and potentates, and thrones,
In their triple degrees; regions, to which
All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
Than what this garden is to all the earth,
And all the sea, from one entire globose
Stretch'd into longitude; which having paſs'd,
At length, into the limits of the north
They came; and Satan to his royal seat
High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
Raised on a mount, with pyramids and towers,
From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold;
The palace of great Lucifer, so call
That structure, in the dialect of men
Interpreted, which not long after, he,
Affecting all equality with God,
In imitation of that mount, whereon
Meſsiah was declared, in sight of Heaven,
The Mountain of the Congregation call'd;
For thither he aſsembled all his train,
Pretending, so commanded, to consult
About the great reception of their king,
Thither to come; and, with calumnious art

Of counterfeited truth, thus held their ears.
Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers,
If these magnifick titles yet remain
Not merely titular; since, by decree,
Another now hath to himself engrofs'd
All power, and us eclipsed, under the name
Of King anointed; for whom all this haste
Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here,
This only to consult, how we may best,
With what may be devised of honours new,
Receive him, coming to receive from us
Knee-tribute, yet unpaid, prostration vile,
Too much to one, but double how endured,
To one, and to his image now proclaim'd?
But what if better counsels might erect
Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke?
Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend
The supple knee? ye will not, if I trust
To know ye right; or if ye know yourselves
Natives and sons of Heaven, poſſeſs'd before
By none, and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free; for orders and degrees
Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
Who can in reason then or right aſsume
Monarchy over such as live by right
His equals? if in power and splendour leſs,
In freedom equal: or can introduce
Law and edict on us, who without law
Err not? much leſs for this to be our Lord,
And look for adoration, to the abuse

Of those imperial titles, which asſert
Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve.
  Thus far his bold discourse, without control,
Had audience, when among the seraphim
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal adored
The Deity, and divine commands obey'd,
Stood up; and, in a flame of zeal severe,
The current of his fury thus opposed.
  O argument blasphemous, false, and proud!
Words, which no ear ever to hear in Heaven
Expected; least of all from thee, ingrate,
In place, thyself so high above thy peers.
Canst thou, with impious obloquy, condemn
The just decree of God, pronounced and sworn,
That to his only Son, by right endow'd
With regal sceptre, every soul in Heaven
Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due,
Confeſs him rightful king? unjust thou say'st,
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
And equal over equals to let reign,
One over all, with unsucceeded power.
Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute
With him the points of liberty, who made
Thee what thou art, and form'd the powers of Heaven
Such as he pleased, and circumscribed their being?
Yet by experience taught, we know how good,
And of our good, and of our dignity,
How provident he is; how far from thought
To make us leſs, bent rather to exalt
Our happy state, under one head more near

United. But to grant it thee unjust,
That equal over equals monarch reign:
Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,
Or all angelick nature join'd in one,
Equal to him begotten Son? by whom,
As by his word, the mighty Father made
All things, even thee; and all the spirits of Heaven,
By him created in their bright degrees,
Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory named
Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers,
Essential powers; nor by his reign obscured,
But more illustrious made; since he the head,
One of our number, thus reduced becomes;
His laws our laws; all honour to him done
Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,
And tempt not these; but hasten to appease
The incensed Father, and the incensed Son,
While pardon may be found, in time besought.
So spake the fervent angel; but his zeal
None seconded, as out of season judged,
Or singular and rash; whereat, rejoiced
The apostate, and more haughty thus replied.
That we were form'd then, say'st thou? and the work
Of secondary hands, by task transferr'd
From Father to his Son? strange point and new!
Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd: who saw
When this creation was? remember'st thou
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?
We know no time when we were not as now;
Know none before us, self-begot, self-raised

By our own quickening power; when fatal course
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
Of this our native Heaven, ethereal sons.
Our puiſsance is our own; our own right hand
Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold,
Whether by supplication we intend
Addreſs, and to begirt the almighty throne,
Beseeching, or besieging. This report,
These tidings carry to the anointed King;
And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.
He said, and, as the sound of waters deep,
Hoarse murmur echoed to his words applause,
Through the infinite host; nor leſs for that,
The flaming seraph, fearleſs, though alone,
Encompaſs'd round with foes, thus answer'd bold.
O alienate from God, O spirit accursed,
Forsaken of all good; I see thy fall
Determined, and thy haplefs crew involved
In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread,
Both of thy crime and punishment: henceforth,
No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
Of God's Meſsiah; those indulgent laws
Will not be now vouchsafed; other decrees
Against thee are gone forth, without recall;
That golden sceptre, which thou didst reject,
Is now an iron rod, to bruise and break
Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise,
Yet, not for thy advice, or threats, I fly
These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath

Impendent, raging into sudden flame,
Distinguish not: for soon expect to feel
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.
Then, who created thee lamenting learn,
When, who can uncreate thee, thou shalt know.
  So spake the seraph Abdiel, faithful found,
Among the faithleſs, faithful only he;
Among innumerable false, unmoved,
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrify'd,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
Nor number, nor example with him wrought,
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single. From amidst them forth he paſs'd,
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
Superiour, nor of violence fear'd aught;
And, with retorted scorn, his back he turn'd
On those proud towers, to swift destruction doom'd.

THE

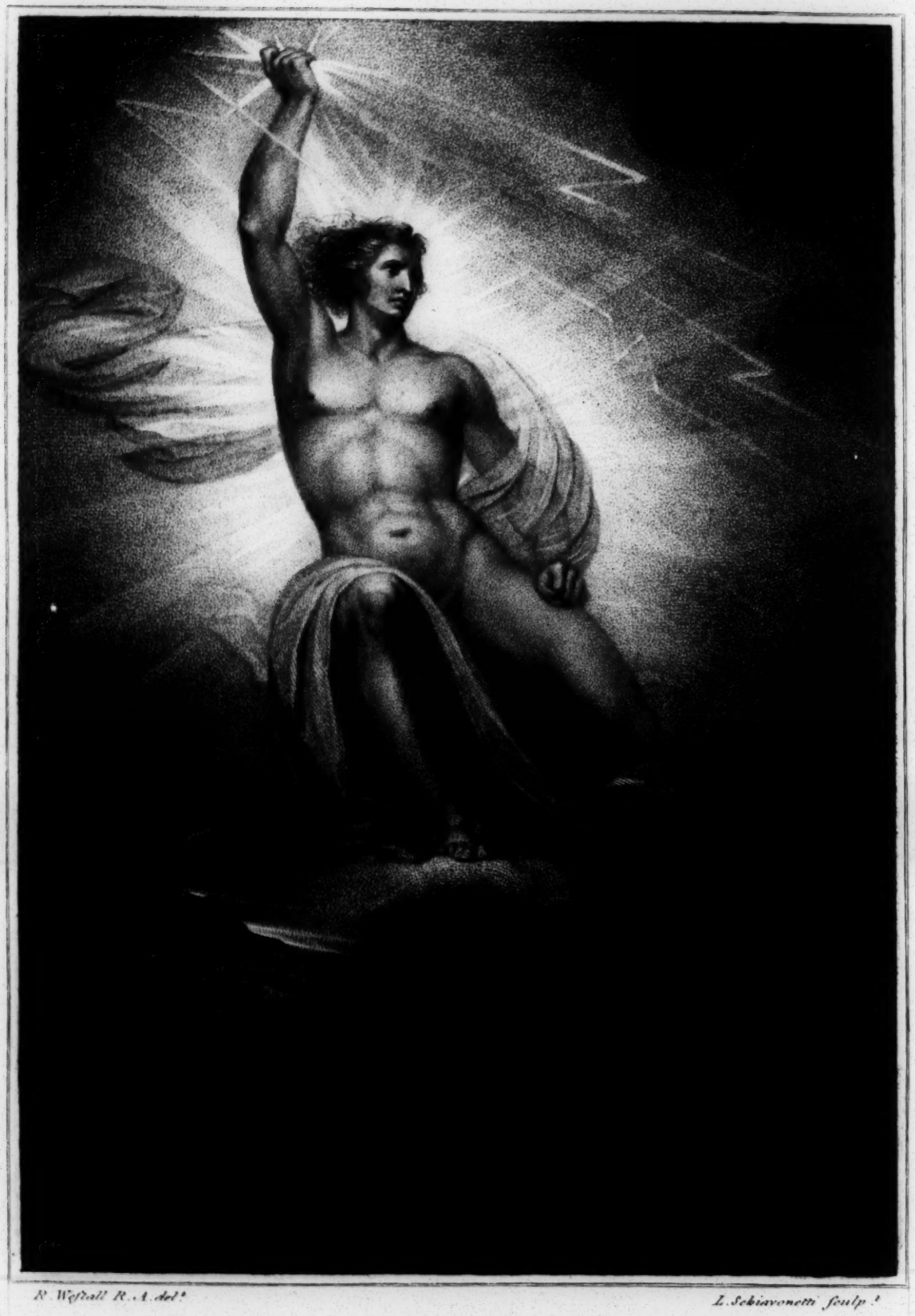
# SIXTH BOOK

OF

# PARADISE LOST

## THE ARGUMENT

Raphael continues to relate how Michael and Gabriel were sent forth to battle, against Satan and his angels. The first fight described: Satan and his powers retire under night: he calls a council, invents devilish engines, which, in the second day's fight, put Michael and his angels to some disorder: but they at length, pulling up mountains, overwhelmed both the force and machines of Satan. Yet the tumult not so ending, God, on the third day, sends Mefsiah his Son, for whom he had reserved the glory of that victory: He, in the power of his Father, coming to the place, and causing all his legions to stand still on either side, with his chariot and thunder driving into the midst of his enemies, pursues them, unable to resist, towards the wall of Heaven; which opening, they leap down, with horrour and confusion, into the place of punishment, prepared for them in the deep. Mefsiah returns with triumph to his Father.



R. Westall R.A. del.ᵗ

L. Schiavonetti sculp.ᵗ

***PARADISE LOST.***

*B. 6. L. 834.*

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# PARADISE LOST

## BOOK VI



All night the dreadleſs angel, unpurſued,
Through Heaven's wide champaign held his way; till morn,
Waked by the circling hours, with roſy hand,
Unbarr'd the gates of light. There is a cave,
Within the mount of God, faſt by his throne,
Where light and darkneſs, in perpetual round,
Lodge and diſlodge by turns, which makes through Heaven
Grateful viciſſitude, like day and night:
Light iſſues forth, and, at the other door,
Obſequious darkneſs enters, till her hour
To veil the Heaven; though darkneſs there might well
Seem twilight here. And now went forth the morn,
Such as in higheſt Heaven array'd in gold
Empyreal; from before her vaniſh'd night,
Shot through with orient beams; when all the plain,
Cover'd with thick embattled ſquadrons bright,
Chariots and flaming arms, and fiery ſteeds,
Reflecting blaze on blaze, firſt met his view.
War he perceived, war in procinct, and found
Already known, what he for news had thought

To have reported: gladly then he mix'd
Among those friendly powers, who him received
With joy and acclamations loud, that one,
That of so many myriads fall'n, yet one
Return'd not lost. On to the sacred hill
They led him high applauded, and present
Before the seat supreme; from whence a voice,
From midst a golden cloud, thus mild was heard.
Servant of God, well done, well hast thou fought
The better fight, who single hast maintain'd,
Against revolted multitudes, the cause
Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms;
And for the testimony of truth hast borne
Universal reproach, far worse to bear
Than violence; for this was all thy care,
To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds
Judged thee perverse: the easier conquest now
Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
Back on thy foes more glorious to return,
Than scorn'd thou didst depart, and to subdue
By force, who reason for their law refuse;
Right reason for their law, and for their king,
Meſsiah, who by right of merit reigns.
Go Michael, of celestial armies prince,
And thou, in military proweſs next,
Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons
Invincible, lead forth my armed saints,
By thousands and by millions ranged for fight;
Equal in number to that godleſs crew
Rebellious: them with fire and hostile arms

Fearleſs aſsault, and, to the brow of Heaven
Purſuing, drive them out from God and bliſs,
Into their place of punishment, the gulf
Of Tartarus; which ready opens wide
His fiery chaos, to receive their fall.
So spake the sovereign voice: and clouds began
To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll
In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames, the sign
Of wrath awaked; nor with leſs dread the loud
Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow:
At which command the powers militant,
That stood for Heaven, in mighty quadrate join'd
Of union irresistible, moved on
In silence their bright legions, to the sound
Of instrumental harmony, that breathed
Heroick ardour to adventurous deeds,
Under their godlike leaders, in the cause
Of God and his Meſsiah. On they move
Indiſsolubly firm; nor obvious hill,
Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream divides
Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground
Their march was, and the paſsive air upbore
Their nimble tread: as when the total kind
Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
Came summon'd over Eden, to receive
Their names of thee: so over many a tract
Of Heaven they march'd, and many a province wide,
Tenfold the length of this terrene: at last,
Far in the horizon, to the north, appear'd
From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretch'd

In battailous aspect, and, nearer view,
Bristled with upright beams innumerable
Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields
Various, with boastful argument portray'd,
The banded powers of Satan hasting on
With furious expedition; for they ween'd
That self-same day, by fight, or by surprise,
To win the mount of God, and on his throne
To set the envier of his state, the proud
Aspirer; but their thoughts proved fond and vain,
In the mid way: though strange to us it seem'd
At first, that angel should with angel war,
And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet
So oft in festivals of joy and love,
Unanimous, as sons of one great sire,
Hymning the eternal Father. But the shout
Of battle now began, and rushing sound
Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
High in the midst, exalted as a god,
The apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat,
Idol of majesty divine, enclosed
With flaming cherubim, and golden shields;
Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now,
'Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,
A dreadful interval, and front to front
Presented stood, in terrible array
Of hideous length. Before the cloudy van,
On the rough edge of battle, ere it join'd,
Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanced,
Came towering, arm'd in adamant and gold:

Abdiel that sight endured not, where he stood
Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
And thus his own undaunted heart explores.
O Heaven! that such resemblance of the Highest
Should yet remain, where faith and realty
Remain not: wherefore should not strength and might
There fail, where virtue fails, or weakest prove,
Where boldest, though to sight unconquerable?
His puiſsance, trusting in the Almighty's aid,
I mean to try, whose reason I have try'd,
Unsound and false: nor is it aught but just,
That he, who in debate of truth hath won,
Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
Victor; though brutish that contest and foul,
When reason hath to deal with force, yet so
Most reason is, that reason overcome.
So pondering, and, from his armed peers
Forth stepping opposite, half-way he met
His daring foe, at this prevention more
Incensed, and thus securely him defied.
Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reach'd
The highth of thy aspiring, unopposed,
The throne of God unguarded, and his side
Abandon'd, at the terrour of thy power,
Or potent tongue: fool, not to think how vain
Against the Omnipotent to rise in arms!
Who, out of smallest things, could without end
Have raised inceſsant armies to defeat
Thy folly; or with solitary hand,
Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow,

Unaided, could have finish'd thee, and whelm'd
Thy legions under darkneſs; but thou seest
All are not of thy train: there be who faith
Prefer, and piety to God, though then
To thee not visible, when I alone
Seem'd in thy world erroneous to diſsent
From all: my sect thou seest; now learn, too late,
How few sometimes may know, when thousands err.
Whom the grand foe, with scornful eye askance,
Thus answer'd. Ill for thee, but in wish'd hour
Of my revenge, first sought for, thou return'st
From flight, seditious angel, to receive
Thy merited reward, the first eſsay
Of this right hand, provoked, since first that tongue,
Inspired with contradiction, durst oppose
A third part of the gods, in synod met,
Their deities to aſsert, who, while they feel
Vigour divine within them, can allow
Omnipotence to none. But well thou comest
Before thy fellows, ambitious to win
From me some plume, that thy succeſs may show
Destruction to the rest: this pause between,
Unanswer'd lest thou boast, to let thee know;
At first I thought that liberty and Heaven,
To heavenly souls, had been all one; but now
I see, that most through sloth had rather serve,
Ministering spirits, train'd up in feast and song;
Such hast thou arm'd, the minstrelsey of Heaven,
Servility with freedom to contend,
As both their deeds compared this day shall prove.

To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern replied.
Apostate, still thou err'st; nor end wilt find
Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
Unjustly thou depravest it with the name
Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains,
Or nature: God and nature bid the same,
When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,
Thyself not free, but to thyself inthrall'd;
Yet lewdly darest our ministering upbraid.
Reign thou in Hell, thy kingdom; let me serve
In Heaven, God ever blefs'd, and his divine
Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd:
Yet chains in Hell, not realms, expect; mean while,
From me return'd, as erst thou saidst, from flight,
This greeting on thy impious crest receive.
So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell,
On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
Nor motion of swift thought, lefs could his shield
Such ruin intercept: ten paces huge
He back recoil'd; the tenth, on bended knee,
His mafsy spear upstay'd; as if on earth
Winds under ground, or waters forcing way
Sidelong, had push'd a mountain from his seat,
Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seized
The rebel thrones, but greater rage, to see
Thus foil'd their mightiest: ours joy fill'd, and shout,

Presage of victory, and fierce desire
Of battle: whereat, Michael bid sound
The arch-angel trumpet; through the vast of Heaven
It sounded, and the faithful armies rung
Hosanna to the Highest: nor stood at gaze
The adverse legions, nor lefs hideous join'd
The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,
And clamour, such as heard in Heaven till now
Was never; arms, on armour clashing, bray'd
Horrible discord, and the madding wheels
Of brazen chariots raged; dire was the noise
Of conflict; over head, the dismal hifs
Of fiery darts in flaming vollies flew,
And flying, vaulted either host with fire.
So, under fiery cope together, rush'd
Both battles main, with ruinous afsault,
And inextinguishable rage; all Heaven
Resounded, and had Earth been then, all Earth
Had to her centre shook. What wonder? when
Millions of fierce encountering angels fought
On either side, the least of whom could wield
These elements, and arm him with the force
Of all their regions: how much more of power,
Army against army numberlefs, to raise
Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb,
Though not destroy, their happy native seat;
Had not the eternal King, omnipotent,
From his strong hold of Heaven high, over-ruled
And limited their might; though number'd such,
As each divided legion might have seem'd

A numerous host; in strength, each armed hand
A legion; led in fight, yet leader seem'd
Each warriour single, as in chief; expert
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway
Of battle; open when, and when to close
The ridges of grim war: no thought of flight,
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
That argued fear; each on himself rely'd,
As only in his arm the moment lay
Of victory. Deeds of eternal fame
Were done, but infinite; for wide was spread
That war, and various; sometimes on firm ground,
A standing fight, then soaring on main wing,
Tormented all the air; all air seem'd then
Conflicting fire: long time in even scale
The battle hung; till Satan, who that day
Prodigious power had shown, and met in arms
No equal, ranging through the dire attack
Of fighting seraphim confused, at length
Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and fell'd
Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed sway
Brandish'd aloft, the horrid edge came down,
Wide wasting; such destruction to withstand
He hasted, and opposed the rocky orb
Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,
A vast circumference: at his approach
The great arch-angel, from his warlike toil
Surceased, and glad, as hoping here to end
Intestine war in Heaven, the arch-foe subdued,
Or captive dragg'd in chains, with hostile frown,

And visage all inflamed, first thus began.
Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,
Unnamed in Heaven, now plenteous, as thou seest
These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,
Though heaviest by just measure on thyself,
And thy adherents; how hast thou disturb'd
Heaven's blefsed peace, and into nature brought
Misery, uncreated till the crime
Of thy rebellion? how hast thou instill'd
Thy malice into thousands, once upright
And faithful, now proved false? But think not here
To trouble holy rest; Heaven casts thee out
From all her confines. Heaven, the seat of blifs,
Brooks not the works of violence and war.
Hence then, and evil go with thee along,
Thy offspring, to the place of evil, Hell,
Thou and thy wicked crew; there mingle broils,
Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,
Or some more sudden vengeance, wing'd from God,
Precipitate thee with augmented pain.
So spake the prince of angels; to whom thus
The adversary. Nor think thou, with wind
Of airy threats, to awe whom yet with deeds
Thou canst not. Hast thou turn'd the least of these
To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise
Unvanquish'd, easier to transact with me
That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats
To chase me hence? err not, that so shall end
The strife, which thou call'st evil, but we style
The strife of glory; which we mean to win,

Or turn this Heaven itself into the Hell
Thou fablest; here however to dwell free,
If not to reign: mean while thy utmost force,
And join him named Almighty to thy aid,
I fly not, but have sought thee far and nigh.
They ended parle, and both addreſs'd for fight
Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue
Of angels, can relate, or, to what things
Liken, on earth conspicuous, that may lift
Human imagination to such highth
Of godlike power? for likest gods they seem'd,
Stood they or moved; in stature, motion, arms,
Fit to decide the empire of great Heaven.
Now waved their fiery swords, and in the air
Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields
Blazed opposite, while expectation stood
In horrour: from each hand, with speed retired,
Where erst was thickest fight, the angelick throng,
And left large field, unsafe within the wind
Of such commotion; such as, to set forth
Great things by small, if nature's concord broke,
Among the constellations war were sprung,
Two planets, rushing from aspect malign
Of fiercest opposition, in mid sky
Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.
Together both, with next to almighty arm
Uplifted imminent, one stroke they aim'd,
That might determine, and not need repeat,
As not of power at once; nor odds appear'd
In might or swift prevention: but the sword

Of Michael, from the armoury of God,
Was given him, temper'd so, that neither keen
Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite
Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor stay'd,
But with swift wheel reverse, deep entering, shared
All his right side. Then Satan first knew pain,
And writhed him to and fro convolved; so sore
The griding sword, with discontinuous wound,
Pass'd through him: but the ethereal substance closed,
Not long divisible; and, from the gash,
A stream of nectarous humour issuing flow'd
Sanguine, such as celestial spirits may bleed,
And all his armour stain'd, erewhile so bright.
Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run
By angels many and strong, who interposed
Defence; while others bore him on their shields,
Back to his chariot, where it stood retired,
From off the files of war: there they him laid,
Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame,
To find himself not matchless, and his pride
Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
His confidence to equal God in power.
Yet soon he heal'd; for spirits, that live throughout
Vital in every part, not as frail man,
In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,
Cannot but by annihilating die;
Nor, in their liquid texture mortal wound
Receive, no more than can the fluid air:
All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,

All intellect, all sense; and as they please,
They limb themselves, and colour, shape or size
Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.
Mean while, in other parts, like deeds deserved
Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,
And, with fierce ensigns, pierced the deep array
Of Moloch, furious king; who him defy'd,
And at his chariot wheels, to drag him bound
Threaten'd, nor, from the Holy One of Heaven
Refrain'd his tongue blasphemous; but anon,
Down cloven to the waist, with shatter'd arms,
And uncouth pain, fled bellowing. On each wing,
Uriel and Raphael, his vaunting foe,
Though huge, and in a rock of diamond arm'd,
Vanquish'd, Adramelech, and Asmodai;
Two potent thrones, that to be less than gods
Disdain'd, but meaner thoughts learn'd in their flight,
Mangled with ghastly wounds, through plate and mail.
Nor stood unmindful Abdiel, to annoy
The atheist crew; but with redoubled blow,
Ariel and Arioch, and the violence
Of Ramiel, scorch'd and blasted, overthrew.
I might relate of thousands, and their names
Eternize here on earth; but those elect
Angels, contented with their fame in Heaven,
Seek not the praise of men: the other sort,
In might though wonderous, and in acts of war,
Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom
Cancell'd from Heaven and sacred memory,
Nameless, in dark oblivion let them dwell.

For strength, from truth divided and from just,
Illaudable, naught merits but dispraise
And ignominy; yet to glory aspires,
Vainglorious, and through infamy seeks fame:
Therefore, eternal silence be their doom.
And now their mightiest quell'd, the battle swerved,
With many an inroad gored; deformed rout
Enter'd, and foul disorder; all the ground
With shiver'd armour strown, and, on a heap,
Chariot and charioteer lay overturn'd,
And fiery foaming steeds; what stood, recoil'd
O'er-wearied, through the faint Satanick host,
Defensive scarce, or, with pale fear surprised,
Then first with fear surprised, and sense of pain,
Fled ignominious; to such evil brought
By sin of disobedience, till that hour
Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
Far otherwise the inviolable saints,
In cubick phalanx firm, advanced entire,
Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd:
Such high advantages their innocence
Gave them above their foes; not to have sinn'd,
Not to have disobey'd; in fight they stood
Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pain'd
By wound, though from their place by violence moved.
Now night her course began, and over Heaven
Inducing darknefs, grateful truce imposed,
And silence, on the odious din of war:
Under her cloudy covert both retired,
Victor and vanquish'd: on the foughten field,

Michael and his angels, prevalent,
Encamping, placed in guard their watches round,
Cherubick waving fires: on the other part,
Satan with his rebellious disappear'd,
Far in the dark dislodged: and void of rest,
His potentates, to council call'd by night,
And in the midst, thus undismay'd began.
O now in danger try'd, now known in arms
Not to be overpower'd, companions dear,
Found worthy, not of liberty alone,
Too mean pretence, but what we more affect,
Honour, dominion, glory, and renown;
Who have sustain'd one day in doubtful fight,
And if one day, why not eternal days?
What Heaven's Lord had powerfullest to send
Against us, from about his throne, and judged
Sufficient to subdue us to his will;
But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,
Of future we may deem him, though till now
Omniscient thought. True is, lefs firmly arm'd,
Some disadvantage we endured, and pain,
Till now not known, but known, as soon contemn'd,
Since now, we find this our empyreal form
Incapable of mortal injury,
Imperishable; and though pierced with wound,
Soon closing, and by native vigour heal'd.
Of evil then so small, as easy think
The remedy; perhaps more valid arms,
Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
May serve to better us, and worse our foes,

Or equal what between us made the odds,
In nature none: if other hidden cause
Left them superiour, while we can preserve
Unhurt our minds and understanding sound,
Due search and consultation will disclose.
He sat; and in the afsembly next up stood
Nisroch, of principalities the prime;
As one he stood escaped from cruel fight,
Sore toil'd, his riven arms to havock hewn,
And cloudy in aspect, thus answering spake.
Deliverer from new lords, leader to free
Enjoyment of our right as gods; yet hard
For gods, and too unequal work we find,
Against unequal arms to fight in pain,
Against unpain'd, impafsive; from which evil
Ruin must needs ensue: for what avails
Valour or strength, though matchlefs, quell'd with pain,
Which all subdues, and makes remifs the hands
Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well
Spare out of life, perhaps, and not repine,
But live content, which is the calmest life:
But pain is perfect misery, the worst
Of evils, and excefsive, overturns
All patience. He who therefore can invent,
With what more forcible we may offend
Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves
No lefs, than for deliverance what we owe.
Whereto, with look composed, Satan replied.
Not uninvented, that, which thou aright

Believest so main to our succefs, I bring.
Which of us, who beholds the bright surface
Of this ethereous mould, whereon we stand,
This continent of spacious Heaven, adorn'd
With plant, fruit, flower ambrosial, gems and gold;
Whose eye so superficially surveys
These things, as not to mind from whence they grow,
Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,
Of spiritous and fiery spume, till touch'd
With Heaven's ray, and temper'd, they shoot forth
So beauteous, opening to the ambient light?
These, in their dark nativity the deep,
Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame;
Which into hollow engines, long and round,
Thick-ramm'd, at the other bore, with touch of fire
Dilated, and infuriate, shall send forth
From far, with thundering noise among our foes,
Such implements of mischief, as shall dash
To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever stands
Adverse; that they shall fear we have disarm'd
The Thunderer of his only dreaded bolt.
Nor long shall be our labour; yet ere dawn,
Effect shall end our wish. Mean while revive;
Abandon fear; to strength and counsel join'd,
Think nothing hard, much lefs to be despair'd.
He ended; and his words their drooping cheer
Enlighten'd, and their languish'd hope revived.
The invention all admired, and each, how he
To be the inventor mifs'd; so easy it seem'd,
Once found, which, yet unfound, most would have thought

Impofsible: yet haply, of thy race,
In future days, if malice should abound,
Some one, intent on mischief, or inspired
With devilish machination, might devise
Like instrument, to plague the sons of men
For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
Forthwith from council to the work they flew;
None arguing stood; innumerable hands
Were ready; in a moment up they turn'd
Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath
The originals of nature, in their crude
Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam
They found, they mingled, and with subtle art
Concocted and adusted, they reduced
To blackest grain, and into store convey'd:
Part hidden veins digg'd up; nor hath this earth
Entrails unlike, of mineral and stone,
Whereof to found their engines, and their balls
Of mifsive ruin; part incentive reed
Provide, pernicious, with one touch to fire.
So all, ere day-spring, under conscious night,
Secret they finish'd, and in order set,
With silent circumspection unespy'd.
Now when fair morn, orient in Heaven, appear'd,
Up rose the victor angels, and to arms
The matin trumpet sung: in arms they stood
Of golden panoply, refulgent host,
Soon banded; others, from the dawning hills,
Look'd round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,
Each quarter, to descry the distant foe,

Where lodged, or whither fled, or if for fight,
In motion, or in halt: him soon they met,
Under spread ensigns, moving nigh, in slow,
But firm battalion. Back with speediest sail,
Zophiel, of cherubim the swiftest wing,
Came flying, and, in mid air, aloud thus cry'd.
Arm, warriours, arm for fight; the foe at hand,
Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit;
This day, fear not his flight; so thick a cloud
He comes; and, settled in his face, I see
Sad resolution and secure. Let each
His adamantine coat gird well, and each
Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orbed shield,
Borne even or high; for this day will pour down,
If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower,
But rattling storm of arrows, barb'd with fire.
So warn'd he them, aware themselves; and soon
In order, quit of all impediment,
Instant without disturb, they took alarm,
And onward move embattled: when behold,
Not distant far, with heavy pace, the foe
Approaching grofs and huge, in hollow cube,
Training his devilish enginery, impaled
On every side, with shadowing squadrons deep,
To hide the fraud. At interview both stood
A while; but suddenly at head appear'd
Satan, and thus was heard, commanding loud.
Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold;
That all may see who hate us, how we seek
Peace and composure, and, with open breast,

Stand ready to receive them, if they like
Our overture, and turn not back perverse;
But that I doubt: however, witneſs Heaven,
Heaven witneſs thou anon, while we discharge
Freely our part; ye who appointed stand,
Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch
What we propound, and loud, that all may hear.
So scoffing, in ambiguous words, he scarce
Had ended, when to right and left the front
Divided, and to either flank retired:
Which to our eyes discover'd, new and strange,
A triple mounted row of pillars, laid
On wheels, for like to pillars most they seem'd,
Or hollow'd bodies, made of oak or fir,
With branches lopp'd, in wood or mountain fell'd;
Brafs, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths,
With hideous orifice, gaped on us wide,
Portending hollow truce: at each behind
A seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
Stood waving, tipp'd with fire; while we suspense
Collected stood, within our thoughts amused;
Not long, for sudden all at once their reeds
Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied
With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,
But soon obscured with smoke, all Heaven appear'd,
From those deep throated engines belch'd, whose roar
Embowell'd with outrageous noise the air,
And all her entrails tore; disgorging foul
Their devilish glut, chain'd thunderbolts, and hail
Of iron globes; which on the victor host

Levell'd, with such impetuous fury smote,
That whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
Though standing else as rocks; but down they fell
By thousands, angel on arch-angel roll'd;
The sooner for their arms: unarm'd, they might
Have easily, as spirits, evaded swift,
By quick contraction or remove; but now
Foul disipation follow'd, and forced rout;
Nor served it to relax their serried files.
What should they do? if on they rush'd, repulse
Repeated, and indecent overthrow
Doubled, would render them yet more despised,
And to their foes a laughter; for in view
Stood rank'd of seraphim another row,
In posture to displode their second tire
Of thunder: back defeated to return
They worse abhorr'd. Satan beheld their plight,
And to his mates thus in derision call'd.
O friends, why come not on these victors proud?
Ere while they fierce were coming; and when we,
To entertain them fair, with open front
And breast, what could we more? propounded terms
Of composition, straight they changed their minds,
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
As they would dance; yet, for a dance, they seem'd
Somewhat extravagant and wild, perhaps
For joy of offer'd peace: but I suppose,
If our proposals once again were heard,
We should compel them to a quick result.
To whom thus Belial, in like gamesome mood.

Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force urged home,
Such, as we might perceive amused them all,
And stumbled many; who receives them right,
Had need, from head to foot, well understand;
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They show us when our foes walk not upright.
So they, among themselves, in pleasant vein,
Stood scoffing, highten'd in their thoughts, beyond
All doubt of victory; eternal might
To match with their inventions, they presumed
So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
And all his host derided, while they stood
A while in trouble: but they stood not long.
Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms,
Against such hellish mischief, fit to oppose.
Forthwith, behold the excellence, the power,
Which God hath in his mighty angels placed,
Their arms away they threw; and to the hills,
For Earth hath this variety from Heaven,
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale,
Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew;
From their foundations loosening to and fro,
They pluck'd the seated hills, with all their load,
Rocks, waters, woods; and, by the shaggy tops
Up-lifting, bore them in their hands. Amaze,
Be sure, and terrour seized the rebel host;
When coming towards them, so dread, they saw
The bottom of the mountains upward turn'd;
Till, on those cursed engines triple row,

They saw them whelm'd, and all their confidence,
Under the weight of mountains, buried deep;
Themselves invaded next, and, on their heads,
Main promontories flung, which in the air
Came shadowing, and oppreſs'd whole legions arm'd.
Their armour help'd their harm, crush'd in and bruised,
Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain
Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,
Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind
Out of such prison; though spirits of purest light,
Purest at first, now groſs by sinning grown.
The rest, in imitation, to like arms
Betook them, and the neighbouring hills up tore;
So hills amid the air encounter'd hills,
Hurl'd to and fro, with jaculation dire,
That under ground they fought, in dismal shade;
Infernal noise. War seem'd a civil game
To this uproar; horrid confusion, heap'd
Upon confusion, rose: and now all Heaven
Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread,
Had not the almighty Father, where he sits
Shrined in his sanctuary of Heaven secure,
Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
This tumult, and permitted all, advised:
That his great purpose he might so fulfil,
To honour his anointed Son, avenged
Upon his enemies, and to declare
All power on him transferr'd: whence to his Son,
The aſseſsor of his throne, he thus began.
Effulgence of my glory, Son beloved,

Son, in whose face invisible, is beheld
Visibly, what by Deity I am,
And in whose hand, what by decree I do,
Second Omnipotence; two days are pafs'd,
Two days, as we compute the days of Heaven,
Since Michael and his powers went forth to tame
These disobedient: sore hath been their fight,
As likeliest was, when two such foes met arm'd;
For to themselves I left them; and thou know'st,
Equal in their creation they were form'd,
Save what sin hath impair'd, which yet hath wrought
Insensibly, for I suspend their doom;
Whence, in perpetual fight, they needs must last
Endlefs, and no solution will be found.
War, wearied, hath perform'd what war can do,
And to disorder'd rage let loose the reins,
With mountains as with weapons arm'd, which makes
Wild work in Heaven, and dangerous to the main.
Two days are therefore pafs'd, the third is thine;
For thee I have ordain'd it, and thus far
Have suffer'd, that the glory may be thine
Of ending this great war, since none but thou
Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
Immense I have transfused, that all may know,
In Heaven and Hell, thy power above compare;
And this perverse commotion govern'd thus,
To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir,
Of all things to be Heir, and to be King
By sacred unction, thy deserved right.
Go then, thou Mightiest in thy Father's might,

Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
That shake Heaven's basis, bring forth all my war,
My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
Gird on, and sword, upon thy puiſsant thigh;
Pursue these sons of darkneſs, drive them out
From all Heaven's bounds, into the utter deep:
There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
God and Meſsiah, his anointed King.
He said; and on his Son, with rays direct,
Shone full; he, all his Father full expreſs'd,
Ineffably into his face received;
And thus, the filial Godhead answering spake.
O Father, O Supreme of heavenly thrones,
First, highest, holiest, best, thou always seek'st
To glorify thy Son, I always thee,
As is most just; this I my glory account,
My exaltation, and my whole delight,
That thou, in me well pleased, declarest thy will
Fulfill'd, which to fulfil is all my bliſs.
Sceptre and power, thy giving, I aſsume,
And gladlier shall resign, when in the end
Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee
For ever, and in me all whom thou lovest:
But whom thou hatest, I hate, and can put on
Thy terrours, as I put thy mildneſs on,
Image of thee in all things; and shall soon,
Arm'd with thy might, rid Heaven of these rebell'd,
To their prepared ill mansion driven down,
To chains of darkneſs, and the undying worm,
That from thy just obedience could revolt,

Whom to obey is happineſs entire.
Then shall thy saints unmix'd, and from the impure
Far separate, circling thy holy mount,
Unfeigned hallelujahs to thee sing,
Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief.
So said, he, o'er his sceptre bowing, rose
From the right hand of glory, where he sat;
And the third sacred morn began to shine,
Dawning through Heaven. Forth rush'd with whirlwind sound,
The chariot of paternal Deity,
Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
Itself instinct with spirit, but convoy'd
By four cherubick shapes; four faces each
Had wonderous; as with stars their bodies all
And wings were set with eyes, with eyes the wheels
Of beryl, and careering fires between;
Over their heads a crystal firmament,
Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure
Amber, and colours of the showery arch.
He, in celestial panoply all arm'd,
Of radiant urim, work divinely wrought,
Ascended; at his right hand victory
Sat eagle-wing'd; beside him hung his bow
And quiver, with three-bolted thunder stored;
And, from about him, fierce effusion roll'd
Of smoke, and bickering flame, and sparkles dire.
Attended with ten thousand thousand saints,
He onward came, far off his coming shone;
And twenty thousand, I their number heard,
Chariots of God, half on each hand were seen.

He, on the wings of cherub, rode sublime
On the crystalline sky, in sapphire throned,
Illustrious far and wide, but by his own
First seen; them unexpected joy surprised,
When the great ensign of Meſsiah blazed,
Aloft by angels borne, his sign in Heaven;
Under whose conduct Michael soon reduced
His army, circumfused on either wing,
Under their head embodied all in one.
Before him, Power Divine his way prepared;
At his command the uprooted hills retired,
Each to his place; they heard his voice, and went
Obsequious; Heaven his wonted face renew'd,
And with fresh flowerets hill and valley smiled.
This saw his haplefs foes, but stood obdured,
And, to rebellious fight, rallied their powers
Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.
In heavenly spirits could such perverseneſs dwell?
But to convince the proud what signs avail,
Or wonders move the obdurate to relent?
They, harden'd more by what might most reclaim,
Grieving to see his glory, at the sight
Took envy: and aspiring to his highth,
Stood re-embattled fierce, by force or fraud
Weening to prosper, and at length prevail
Against God and Meſsiah, or to fall
In universal ruin last; and now
To final battle drew, disdaining flight,
Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
To all his host, on either hand, thus spake.

Stand still in bright array, ye saints; here stand
Ye angels arm'd; this day from battle rest:
Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
Accepted, fearleſs in his righteous cause,
And as ye have received, so have ye done
Invincibly: but, of this cursed crew,
The punishment to other hand belongs;
Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints:
Number to this day's work is not ordain'd,
Nor multitude; stand only and behold
God's indignation, on these godleſs, pour'd
By me; not you, but me they have despised,
Yet envied; against me is all their rage,
Because the Father, to whom, in Heaven supreme,
Kingdom and power and glory appertains,
Hath honour'd me according to his will.
Therefore, to me their doom he hath aſsign'd;
That they may have their wish, to try with me
In battle, which the stronger proves, they all,
Or I alone against them; since by strength
They measure all, of other excellence
Not emulous, nor care who them excels;
Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.

So spake the Son, and into terrour changed
His countenance, too severe to be beheld,
And full of wrath bent on his enemies.
At once the four spread out their starry wings,
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
Of his fierce chariot roll'd, as with the sound
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host.

He on his impious foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels
The stedfast empyrean shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
Among them he arrived, in his right hand
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
Before him, such as in their souls infix'd
Plagues; they astonish'd, all resistance lost,
All courage; down their idle weapons dropp'd:
O'er shields, and helms, and helmed heads he rode.
Of thrones and mighty seraphim prostrate,
That wish'd the mountains now might be again
Thrown on them, as a shelter from his ire.
Nor lefs on either side tempestuous fell
His arrows, from the fourfold-visaged four,
Distinct with eyes, and, from the living wheels,
Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;
One spirit in them ruled, and every eye
Glared lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
Among the accursed, that wither'd all their strength,
And of their wonted vigour left them drain'd,
Exhausted, spiritlefs, afflicted, fall'n.
Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
His thunder in mid volley; for he meant
Not to destroy, but root them out of Heaven:
The overthrown he raised, and, as a herd
Of goats, or timorous flock together throng'd,
Drove them before him, thunder-struck, pursued
With terrours and with furies, to the bounds
And crystal wall of Heaven; which opening wide,

Roll'd inward, and a spacious gap disclosed,
Into the wasteful deep. The monstrous sight
Struck them with horrour backward, but far worse
Urged them behind; headlong themselves they threw,
Down from the verge of Heaven; eternal wrath
Burnt after them, to the bottomleſs pit.
Hell heard the insufferable noise, Hell saw
Heaven ruining from Heaven, and would have fled,
Affrighted; but strict fate had cast too deep
Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound.
Nine days they fell: confounded Chaos roar'd,
And felt tenfold confusion in their fall,
Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
Incumber'd him with ruin. Hell at last,
Yawning, received them whole, and on them closed:
Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
Disburden'd Heaven rejoiced; and soon repair'd
Her mural breach, returning whence it roll'd.
Sole victor, from the expulsion of his foes,
Meſsiah his triumphal chariot turn'd.
To meet him, all his saints, who silent stood,
Eye witneſses of his almighty acts,
With jubilee advanced; and as they went,
Shaded with branching palm, each order bright
Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,
Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,
Worthiest to reign: he celebrated rode
Triumphant through mid Heaven, into the courts
And temple of his mighty Father, throned

On high; who into glory him received,
Where now he sits, at the right hand of blifs.
Thus, measuring things in Heaven by things on earth,
At thy request, and that thou may'st beware,
By what is past, to thee I have reveal'd,
What might have else to human race been hid,
The discord which befell, and war in Heaven,
Among the angelick powers, and the deep fall
Of those, too high aspiring, who rebell'd
With Satan; he, who envies now thy state,
Who now is plotting, how he may seduce
Thee also from obedience, that with him
Bereaved of happinefs, thou may'st partake
His punishment, eternal misery;
Which would be all his solace and revenge,
As a despite done against the Most High,
Thee once to gain companion of his woe.
But listen not to his temptations, warn
Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard,
By terrible example, the reward
Of disobedience; firm they might have stood,
Yet fell; remember, and fear to transgrefs.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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